THE MAKING OF A GIRL

EVA LOVETT

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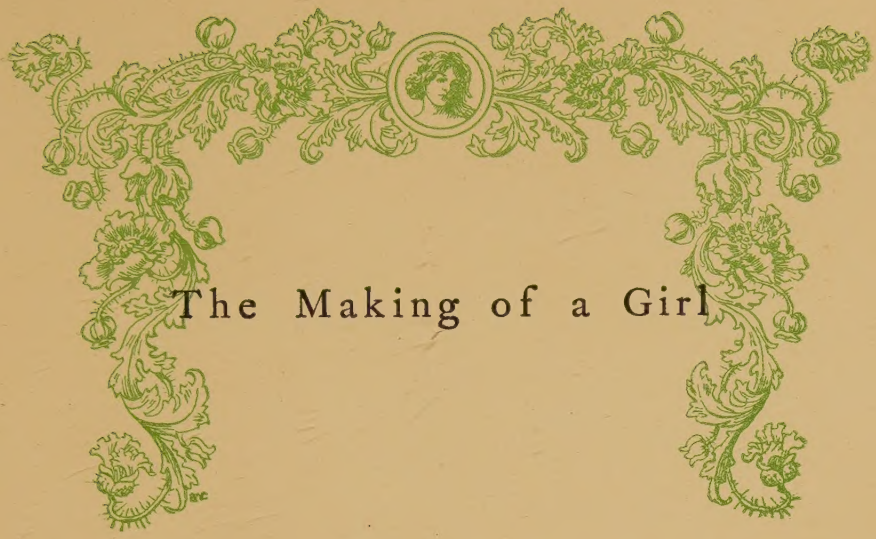
~ Revd B. Nelson ~

~ Rockford ~

~ Mich ~

~ From Mother ~



The Making of a Girl

THE MAKING of a GIRL

BY

EVA LOVETT

AUTHOR OF "THE BILLY STORIES"

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MCMVI

"This above all: To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night, the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

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Glen Ridge, N. J.,
Feb. 17, 1902.

MY friend Eva Lovett has been writing a book for girls, on The Making of a Girl. No other theme takes precedence of this in interest and value, for the girls of to-day will be the women of to-morrow, a to-morrow that is hastening hither on swiftest wings.

Whether or not they shall be married or single, these our daughters, now in training for the future, must wield influence and incur responsibility, and with no uncertain touch shall they help in shaping the issues of society.

Eva Lovett is a woman who has lived, worked, and thought, who has borne the day's burden with simple sincerity, and what she has to say to girls is worth their heeding.

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

A Ball of Cord.

THE great masters of old taught by parables. They used familiar and homely images to illustrate profound truths. "A grain of mustard seed" and "a measure of yeast" were not too small to "liken unto" the kingdom of heaven. We need not be afraid, then, of selecting too common an object to represent the life of a young woman.

Before me lies *a ball of cord.* Will that do?

It is a bright looking ball, of a gay color. It appears smooth and shapely. Yes, you say, it is a perfect ball. It is wound in a fanciful pattern, of which the pretty evenness shows the depth and shadows of color as I turn it about. It has a good outside appearance, at least. That is why it was selected. As we cannot know the wearing qualities of a ball of cord until it is used, we must judge somewhat, in buying, by its attractiveness.

It would be a poor ball of cord that was

only attractive. But the wise manufacturer understands that it must add attractiveness to its other merits. So, besides everything else, he has made it "attractive." That is its final virtue.

We will proceed to unwind it. The ball feels not too hard, yet firm; yielding, yet giving promise of good stuff beneath. It unwinds evenly. Ah! the prettiness of the pattern is continued. Not only upon the outside layer, but, as yard after yard of the cord is unwound, the ball, still shows the same design. The same careful winding is underneath as on the outside. See, layer after layer shows alike! The same pattern, the same finish, the same care—all through. You say we might have known that! That was what gave the outside its peculiarly pleasing appearance. The pattern ran alike clear through! Exactly!

The cord still runs even. There are no rough places, feeling unpleasant to the touch. No loose ends, showing bad workmanship. No knots or snarls, betraying material underneath different from the outside. Certainly! The outside would not

look so perfect if the cord were not smooth and good clear through. One continuous, uniform line runs from beginning to end, from the outside fanciful pattern to the solid centre of the ball.

This cord has good staying qualities. The package it ties does not break apart. The line formed of it sustains many articles without snapping. Without heaviness, it is strong. Without being cumbersome, it can be depended upon in an emergency to bear even more than it promises. It is tough and wiry. While other cords give way in your hands and break apart, this is reliable. A good quality in—cord, is it not?

We are coming near the middle of the ball. The dainty pattern of the outside has gradually, imperceptibly, merged into a precise, regular winding, which goes round and round, over and over, the heart of the ball. The ball is growing very small, but ever the same shape is kept. No lumps or bunchy places are uncovered as we unwind. This ball must be good to the middle. Yes, you say, it was begun well!

See, clear to the end it goes in the same exact manner! The ball is unwound!

We find that the one who planned and made it must have had a clear idea of a perfect ball in his mind before he began. We find that he began his work in the centre. We find that, with the idea in his mind, he began right, and carried his design clear through. We find that the picturesque finish was only the logical outcome of the right beginning. That, as it was impossible to make an attractive ball without a right beginning, it was almost impossible the ball could have been anything but attractive when it was begun so well.

Yes, you say, the maker of that ball of cord knew what he was going to make before he began. It was no haphazard work. He was going to make a perfect ball of cord. He started with that idea in the centre, and he kept it to the finish. You think that?

So is the perfect life of a young woman! We put the right idea first, to begin with! Is not that the proper way? And can the perfect life of a young woman, any more

than a perfect ball of cord, be begun from the outside, think you? Ah, no! All that is perfect must be begun from a centre and worked out. There is no other way to make a perfect thing than this—to begin with a right idea in the centre and work out!

We begin in the centre to work out our life, and there we put the beginning of all things—love and truth. Then, with the thread in our hands, let us begin to wind. There must be staying qualities of the best in this thread. It must stand many a strain. It must hold firmly many burdens. It must keep together many obligations and responsibilities. But carefully as it must fulfill each purpose for which it was made, lavishly as it may be used for every want, it still may go on winding up a perfect life—

"Ne'er spent, but ever spending."

Quietly, evenly, with the sureness of a perfect design, with the smoothness of a comprehended finish, we wind on. In fold after fold we inclose all the graces, all the proper observances of life. They are all

included in the design. They are parts of the whole, and in winding up our perfect life we necessarily include these also.

Lastly comes the finish, the pattern—the refinements and courtesies of daily life. A good life may be made without these, as a useful ball of cord without its pretty pattern. But as the proper shaping of the ball intensifies the lively color and beauty of the pattern, so the inward worth of a life transfigures the outward behavior, giving it a loveliness never attained by a superficial manner.

After all—the actual sermon is very short: Put truth in the middle, and work out!

The Work of Every Day.

IT was just at dusk when Mollie came in to ask me how I felt. And then she sat down at my feet, with a weary little sigh, as she said:

"Don't you believe that the little common everyday things are harder to bear than the big things, Auntie?"

"Pin-pricks worse than a wound, eh, Mollie?"

"Something like that. Oh, I suppose I shall have big trials, by and by, but it don't seem as if those would be so hard—tiresomely hard, as just ordinary everyday little trials. I've been clearing up my bureau-drawers—I do it every Saturday, and darning my stockings—and I just hate it. It seems horrid to spend one's time doing such petty things. I will not do these things, when I grow older. I can't think how grown people can do these things as if they liked

doing them. Why, if one could suffer grandly, or work hard for some great object, or die in a noble cause! But to spend one's time clearing bureau-drawers!"

I shook my head at her, as I patted the dimpled little hands that had been clearing bureau-drawers.

"It is very much harder to live to-day than it is to live next week, or next month, or next year, is it not, Mollie? We all live much in the future, young people most of all. They have not much past to think over yet, and the vague, unknown future may hold many a romance in its misty landscape."

"Yes," breathed Mollie, turning an appreciative face up to me.

"Yes," I said, thinking of another girl, who had dreamed just such great dreams, and found out that life meant doing, and not dreaming of deeds.

"Yes," I went on, half to Mollie and half to myself: "The youthful soul is ardent. It dreams continually of great deeds, of lofty accomplishments. The little things of every day look small and mean, and it chafes and

frets under the trivial duties, the common, stupid things, that every day brings to do. It marvels that its elders can put patience, careful work, even interest, into these petty things which seem to have no meaning or sense—to be a very hindrance in the path over which it longs to fly to the goal.

"I believe every young man and woman who is going to be good for anything in life feels just this impatience and fretfulness and disgust of the ordinary things, with which every day is thickly set. And I would not have it otherwise. The discontent is good. I would not jeer at or preach it down. I believe it means something. For those who feel a longing for higher work, there *is* a higher work to do. For those who yearn to climb, the ladder is always ready, and their very impatience is a sign that they are going to get a chance to get to the top—by and by!

"By and by—yes! For you cannot get to the top of the ladder except by stepping first upon the bottom rung. And the bottom rung of the ladder you long to climb is before you to-day. In your eagerness to

get to the top, you are scorning the first step. You have got to begin *there.*

"You need never for an instant lose sight of your aim. Perhaps you see an injustice in this world which you long to right. Perhaps you discern a wrong which you burn to avenge. It may be you are laughed at if you mention your secret hopes, your soaring aspirations. Yet those who laugh are wrong. Your ambitions were not given you for nothing. Every worthy ambition was meant to be fulfilled, and yours is no exception. And I believe truly that those who turn to their nearest and present duty with an earnest will, keeping ever before them their lofty aim, will, some time in life, be given an opportunity to do the very thing they have always longed to do—in God's own good way, and in His own good time.

"It is the way you do your present work that is going to determine what future work will be given you. You must be faithful first over a few things, before you can be intrusted with the many. Great deeds are not done without long apprenticeship, patient waiting, and pain. But

it will be worth the price to do them—worth it all!

"And so, keeping the end you cherish in view, if you will begin faithfully at the petty and common things of every day, putting into them a loving will and a strong endeavor, by and by this strange thing will come about.

"In a day and an hour when you least expect it—it might be when you have almost given up hope—suddenly a door will be opened, and you will see with astonishment that the road you have so long patiently travelled has been the very one by which, all unknowingly, you have come to the fulfillment of your life's ambition. The efforts over which you have wept as failures, were but the steps by which you had reached it. Although you did not see it, yet you were walking toward it all the time.

"Do you think that will not be worth the price you have paid?

'Be not amazed at life. 'Tis still
The plan of God, with His elect:
Their hopes *exactly to fulfill,*
In times and ways they least expect!'"

Your Own Affairs.

"WE all have affairs of some sort, big or little," said I to Mollie, when she told me she had no affairs to settle. "You surely have some little questions to decide occasionally, have you not?"

"Just little things," slightingly.

"Perhaps nothing very much. Still, you have something. If you paid more attention to them, perhaps you would have more. You have these small questions to decide now, and you will have greater ones later. Just as soon as you are ready for them, they will come to you. And the way you make your little decisions, now, will influence very much the way you make your greater decisions later. At present, things happen, sometimes at school, or at home, where you have to make a decision."

"But it never seems as if they amounted to much," persisted Mollie.

"But the larger events of your life are

made up of these little affairs, small though they may seem. And these greater ones make bigger ones yet, all woven and interwoven together. And these little matters in your hands, will gradually influence the larger ones. For all practical purposes, we can assume that you have the guidance of these small circumstances, that it is upon your will these events wait. Then each small thing you do is worth doing in the best way, in the right way, instead of the wrong way. Each act is worth some thought, some consideration of its possible and probable consequences.

" For we do not come very far on our voyage of life before we discover that sometimes the smallest action has grave consequences. Sometimes consequences we never intended, sometimes consequences we could not possibly foresee, sometimes consequences which, if we could have foreseen, we would have accepted any penalty rather than commit the action which brought them about.

" For you have doubtless seen, Mollie, that upon even such small matters as the

going on a visit or remaining home, allowing yourself a gratification or denying yourself, hang events of which you did not dream when you decided the right course to take."

"Yes," nodded Mollie, "that is true. But if we do not know what is going to happen, how can we be to blame for what does happen? If I was sure something wrong would come of it, if I went to a certain place, I would not go there. But if I think nothing will happen, and it does, how is that my fault? I might do a thing, meaning good to come of it, and harm might come. How can I help that?"

"No, you cannot tell what result will follow. That is why you should decide to do the best you can, and from a right motive each time. But whether you consider the consequences of your action good or bad, they are certain to bring about the best results to you, if you have decided upon the action from right motives. That is as certain as that sunlight will follow after the sun rises. I repeat it—if you have done a thing from a good motive, good will flow

from it to you; however doubtful the issue may seem for a time, good shall come to you as certainly as sunlight follows sunrise. Do not fear you have made a mistake. Do not repent or regret what you have done. You did right. Then wait! The end will surely justify your faith.

"So it would seem, Mollie, as if the main thing, nay, the one thing, to be certain of is to get the motive right. And that is largely true. If your motives are pure and loving, it is not likely that dishonorable or unlovely actions will flow from them. If you *mean* to do right, the chances are that you do not do wrong. Do you not understand that?"

"But sometimes it is different from that," said Mollie thoughtfully. "Sometimes I mean to do a right thing, and I find I have made a mistake. The thing seems to be wrong after all, or people do not like it, and I am found fault with for doing what I did with the best intentions."

"Do not let that trouble you in the least, Mollie! Having done it from right motives, being satisfied that your motive was good,

you may dismiss the matter from your mind. You have nothing to do with the result. You cannot prevent it or alter it. It passed altogether and forever out of your hands after you made up your mind what to do and did it."

"Swift horses cannot o'ertake the spoken word," quoted Mollie.

"Yes, the action of an hour ago is as completely past as that of a century ago. There will be consequences, of course. Right or wrong, we get the wages of our work, we reap what we have sown; we must bear the results of our actions. That is a law from which we cannot escape."

"But if we meant right—" Mollie said, wistfully.

"Ah, if you did, then it was right for you to do it, and right will come of it, somehow, although you may not at first understand how. Don't spend time in moaning or regretting what is past. Think only of what you are doing to-day. Think of your present action. The past one has been taken out of your hands. The future one has not yet been given into them."

Your Own Affairs.

"If we have made a mistake in the past, it may help us to do better in the present?" Mollie smiled, hopefully.

"Yes, if you made a mistake in a little matter yesterday, that may teach you to do better in a bigger matter to-day. It is by mistakes we learn. Study the matter out for yourself; don't ask too much advice, but let each mistake show you a rock which you must avoid in the future."

Practical Jokes.

SHE wanted to know what I thought of practical jokes.

"What do you think of them?" I asked her.

"Oh, I think they are all right among friends who can give and take a joke with each other. I don't think it's best to try them upon people unless you are sure they won't get mad. Some people can never take a joke, and you make 'em angry if you hint at such a thing, ever so little. But between people who are sensible, it's fun enough. It must be 'give and take,' you know. I don't feel so angry at my friend's little joke on me, and she don't feel so angry at mine on her."

"Never? No, never?"

"Well—hardly ever!" laughed Mollie.

"So you do think that you might feel hurt—just a wee bit—if the joke were a severe one?"

"I mean that I might just for a minute, perhaps," confessed Mollie. "But I think a friend would not play a severe joke!"

"And I think that a true friend would not play a joke, however small, on another. And not only for the value of the friendship, but for the sake of her own happiness and content."

"How?"

"She would feel uncertain of her friend's feeling about the matter. She would not be perfectly sure how much the friend minded the little joke. It would place her friend's trust in her in jeopardy. And it is not safe to destroy your friend's trust, even ever so little, if you want to keep the friend."

"Yes, of course, friends should trust each other," hastily, from Mollie. "That's the reason I think they can afford to laugh at each other."

"They might laugh—one at the other, when the event occurs with which they have nothing to do. But a practical joke means that you make the occasion for laughing yourself."

"Yes, I suppose it does!"

"Why, the essence—the point of a practical joke—is a laugh at or a reflection upon the person upon whom it is played. It may be upon the person's physical defects, but you are probably better taught than to play so coarse a joke as that——"

"Yes," Mollie said, wonderingly.

"Yes. Then your practical joke is on your friend's mental defects or peculiarities—perhaps her absence of mind, poor memory, carelessness, or disorder, her little weak point, or her foolish habit. You can readily see that a joke is ill-bred which has for its point bodily infirmities. And should vulgarity be dignified as wit, or cruelty be condoned as fun, because the object of the jest is a mental and not a physical weakness?"

"I didn't think of it exactly that way," hesitated Mollie.

"Perhaps not, Mollie. Yet I have known people who were as sensitive when laughed at for a mental weakness, as another might be for a bodily one."

"But I don't see why they should," insisted Mollie.

"There are others beside you who don't see it, my dear. You are not the only one who thinks that the only real things are those we see with our eyes and touch with our fingers, and with nothing else. And it is undoubtedly true that many persons feel with their fingers and with nothing else. They don't feel inside at all. If you know people like that, it would be safe enough to play a joke on their mental qualities, because they haven't any feelings to be hurt."

"I don't think I know anyone just like that," remarked Mollie, slowly.

"Then you have one reason, a practical one, against a practical joke—it hurts your friend's happiness, though she may laugh, for your sake. But there is another reason against it."

"Well?"

"You want to be liked—to be loved—every one does. Now, when your friend feels hurt, mentally, even though she laughs, does she love you more because you hurt her?"

"She doesn't mind if it is funny." She said it in rather an uncomfortable way, however.

"When you have made her see, in a glaring or absurd way, her weakness, or folly, she loves you better than before, does she?"

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mollie, "if you put it in that way—no."

"Certainly not, nor would you love her better under the same circumstances. We are told that the wounds of a friend are faithful. But the friend must be wise and gentle to give them aright. I do not think that the right way is by ridicule."

"'The wounds of a friend?'" repeated Mollie. "That makes me think—a friend might wound, then. But she would not do it if she could help it. Is that what you mean?"

"Something like that, dear."

"So if she did it, it would be for some good reason. Perhaps to gain some better good for her friend."

"Yes—certainly. Yes."

"And not just to have a laugh at her. Only to help, somehow. And I think she would do it gently and lovingly."

"That is a very good description, dear, of the wound of a friend. But that is not the

kind that is given by a practical joke. Your friend does not feel pleasantly about it, though she may conceal her feeling. She does not love you better. She puts up with it because there are so many things about you she can love, that she feels able to pass over, or put up with, the part she does not quite like."

Then Mollie began to smile in a way that showed me she "saw" with other eyes than those which watched me.

"You see, the point is, my dear, I don't much care to have friends who just 'put up' with me, do you?"

"No, no," laughed Mollie.

"No. I don't think I would like my friend to say to herself, 'Well, she is rather a nice girl, so I must put up with her jokes.'"

She laughed again and shook her head at me.

"Exactly. I perceive you understand. Confidentially, if I had to be 'put up with' by my friends, I'd rather not have any. If I am to be good for anything, I must be good clear through. When I find my friend's friendship halting over something it

submits to, but does not approve, that instant I know there is something in me to be cast out."

"I want to be worth loving," Mollie confessed, wistfully.

"Of course, you do. Better than having love is to be worth love, dear. And to be worth it, is to be true and kind all through and always, not sometimes and in spots. To be all through alike—that is not a bad motto, Mollie."

"No," said Mollie, "it isn't."

Wholesomeness.

"WHAT do you think is the most attractive quality a girl can have?" some one asked me recently.

"Wholesomeness—decidedly," answered I.

"Nonsense. You mean unselfishness, or thoughtfulness, or truthfulness, or some high-sounding moral quality. Wholesomeness is a common everyday virtue. It sounds as if you were going to recommend girls to be clean."

"Perhaps cleanliness is a part of what I mean. But wholesomeness includes a great deal more. The very word expresses something of the idea. Whole — someness. Something that is whole, sound all through. A wholesome girl would be one healthy and sound all through in heart, in mind and in body."

"So you see cleanliness is a necessary part of wholesomeness. Cleanliness is said to be next to godliness, and I think it must

lap over a little for it seems to be a godly sort of virtue. It is certainly desirable to have a pure heart, an unselfish disposition, and a noble character, and I think a girl of such a character would wish to express herself by an orderly, well-groomed appearance. When she did, she would be wholesome. Whole—some. We usually get to know people's hearts and minds by knowing their bodies first, and if we find an unwholesome or a tawdry-looking exterior, we generally don't care to investigate further.

"Every girl cannot have beautiful features, or a perfect form. But any girl can have a clean, wholesome, soft skin, by taking a little thought and pains. She can devote such care to small details of her toilet that she will look equally pleasing whether she opens her lips, or keeps them closed. She can always have her hair tidy and arranged in some pretty fashion peculiar to herself, as well as simple. In short, every part of her person should have the finished look peculiar to the well-groomed girl, who knows that attention to small matters is what makes the attractiveness of the woman.

Wholesomeness.

" It follows, that my wholesome girl will not carry ragged ruffles, or have soiled or tattered lace dangling about her neck and hands. Her everyday gown will not be an over-fine street or party frock, that has outlived usefulness for its original purpose, but is good enough to wear around the house. I think my wholesome girl would prefer a five-cent cambric, plainly made, clean and whole, to a sleazy silk, whose frayed-out edges, gaping flounces, and generally disconsolate air of having seen better days, makes it look absurdly out of place, when its owner is supposed to be helping to make home orderly and inviting.

" I am sure the neck garniture of my wholesome girl will be neat, dainty, and often renewed, even if she should have to do the necessary work with her own little hands. And I don't believe her gloves will show rips, or her shoes gaps where buttons should be. In short, I think that from the crown of her well-kept head to the very sole of her well-kept feet, my ideal girl would look so fresh and sweet, that, beholding her, you would long to kiss her, and

pray that heaven may only give you a chance."

"You are an enthusiast about this wholesome girl, are you not?" said the audience, laughing.

"Perhaps I am; but I have not half described her attractiveness. The heart and mind of my wholesome girl will be just as clean and sound as her body. She has no corrupt nor evil feelings, nor any unkind nor jealous thoughts. My wholesome girl believes in being helpful whenever she can, and she has common-sense ideas about her relations to life, and to other people. I think she is simple-minded rather than analytical in her mental make-up, and is more inclined to act from straightforward motives than from complicated ones.

"She is a breezy girl, an out-of-door girl, who delights in active sports, and has a supple body, trained to obey her energetic and lively mind. She brings sunshine and fresh air into the room when she enters it, and people are glad, seeing her, that she is alive."

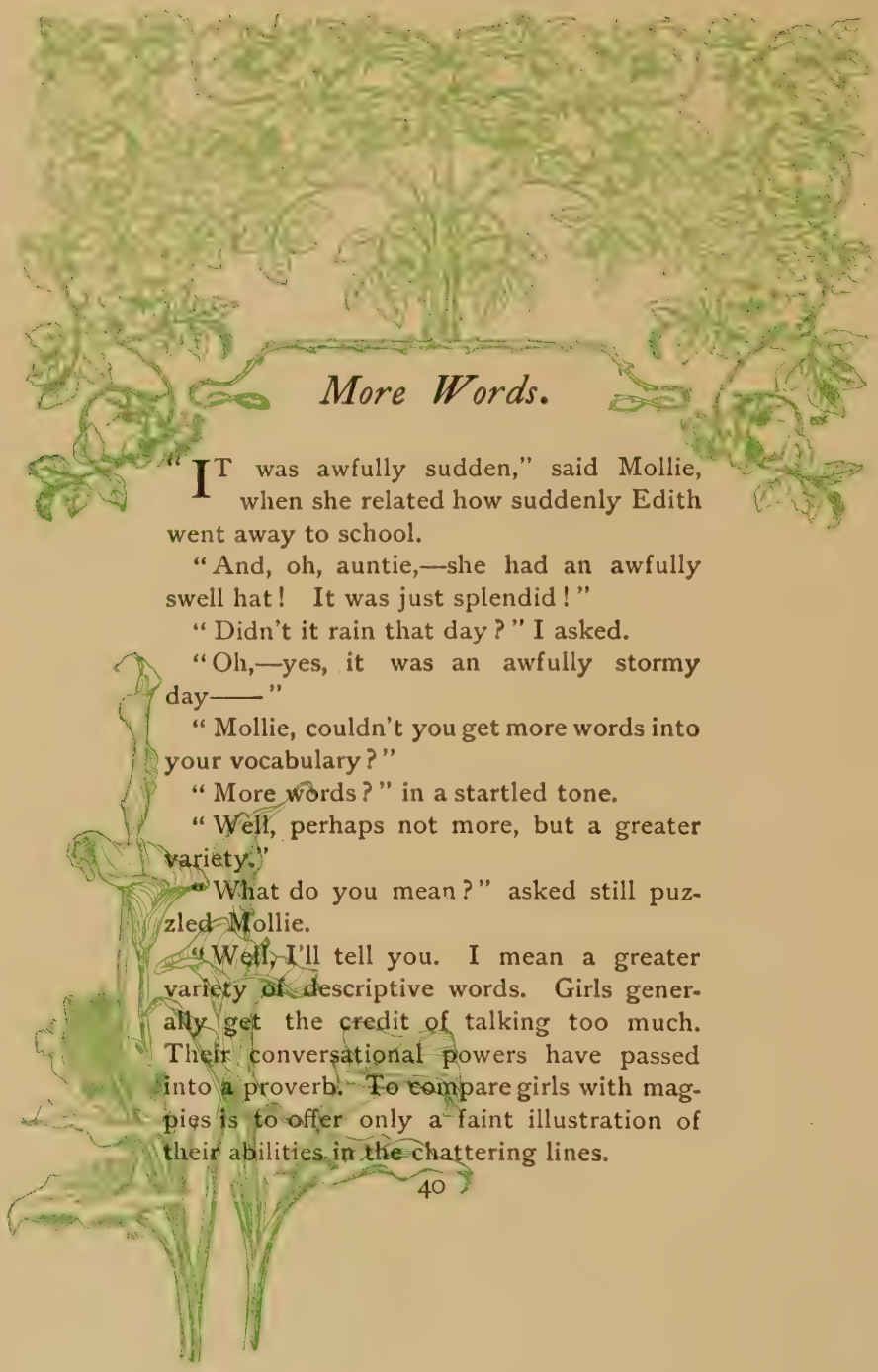
"Then she has no faults at all?" says my friend, shaking her head at me.

Wholesomeness.

"Oh, yes, she may have faults of disposition, perhaps. She may be too impulsive, or quick-tempered, a trifle too decided, or too fond of making her own experiments. But such faults as that she will out-grow. She is, above all else, sound and wholesome, and faults do not find root in such a nature."

"I think the girl you are talking about is the ideal girl."

"I think she is, too. That is about what wholesome means, isn't it?"



More Words.

"IT was awfully sudden," said Mollie, when she related how suddenly Edith went away to school.

"And, oh, auntie,—she had an awfully swell hat! It was just splendid!"

"Didn't it rain that day?" I asked.

"Oh,—yes, it was an awfully stormy day——"

"Mollie, couldn't you get more words into your vocabulary?"

"More words?" in a startled tone.

"Well, perhaps not more, but a greater variety."

"What do you mean?" asked still puzzled Mollie.

"Well, I'll tell you. I mean a greater variety of descriptive words. Girls generally get the credit of talking too much. Their conversational powers have passed into a proverb. To compare girls with magpies is to offer only a faint illustration of their abilities in the chattering lines.

More Words.

"But after all, the chattering of girls has a pleasant sound in the ears of their elders. Edith and Mabel discourse of their ribbons and their gowns, and the latest story they have read. They have meaningless, gushing confidences about all their friends, masculine and feminine. They overflow with frothy nonsense which means nothing at all. Throughout their talk, they laugh, for the pure pleasure of laughing, and from no particular reason."

"I suppose you mean giggling," sighed Mollie. "Yes, I suppose girls do giggle, but,——"

"Don't misunderstand me, dear, I think the chatter and laughter of girls is good to hear and see. I was at a friend's house a few days ago, and with two older women I overheard four girls talking together in the next room. Each woman smiled, an indulgent and loving smile, and one cried out impulsively, 'I do think girls are the sweetest things!' I believe sensible older people enjoy hearing girls chatter and laugh, as they enjoy hearing trees rustle, and brooks splash over stones.

"But we like to hear our brooks splash musically, and our trees rustle with a gentle and not a rasping sound. The chatter of light-hearted girls need not be lessened in quantity, but it could be cleared of a few qualities which sometimes make it discordant.

"You might leave out the ill-natured element. Talk over your friends' good characteristics as much as you please, but the disagreeable thing you know about her, bury in the deepest recesses of your heart. It is better to discuss for two hours the making of a jacket, or the surest way to tie a bow, than to relate a story, however entertaining, which shows up somebody's meanness or bad temper. Personal gossip is commonplace and vulgar, and it ought to grate upon your feelings whenever you hear it. It ought to sound to you as dreadful as the sound a small boy makes when he holds his pencil up straight and 'skreeks' it all across his slate!"

"Perhaps that is something which ought to be left out," agreed Mollie.

"Another improvement you might make

in your chattering, is to put in a greater variety of words. You pronounce your friend's hat or rings 'perfectly lovely' or 'too sweet for anything.' You bestow the same epithets upon an opera or a book; upon a sunset or a landscape; or, reading some fine sentiment, you comment upon it with the same expression. Does not such repetition show a very poor command of words?

"I knew a father once who often said to his daughters: 'Girls, get new words into your vocabularies!' That is a good experiment for any girl to try. And it is an experiment which pays well for the trouble."

"How can that be done?" inquired Mollie, abruptly.

"How? Why, if you cannot do it by a careful choice of your words, or by listening to other people who are picturesque talkers, or by reading good literature, get a book of synonyms, and learn by heart a few other adjectives besides 'lovely' and 'awful.' There are a few others in the English language, my dear, and you will find, as I have said, that the improvement in your

vocabulary will more than repay you for the trouble and time you took to effect it.

"It stands to reason that half-a-dozen words cannot express everything you wish to say. Some celebrated author said that for everything one wished to express there existed a word which exactly expressed it. It was only a matter of time to find it, and he considered the proper word well worth the trouble of a search."

"That might do for a writer, but would it be worth the trouble to an ordinary girl?" asked Mollie.

"Yes, indeed. The ordinary girl does not wish to be an ordinary woman. The improvement in her conversation would be well worth the work. And it would take less work than you think, although you may exclaim that it would be too burdensome to constantly take so much trouble in careless talk, and declare that you could never reach such perfection as was possible to an author and a student."

"It would make one talk slower!" laughed the girl.

"Yes. The effort to choose proper words

and to select new ones is somewhat troublesome at first, but you will find it becomes easier—less of an effort—very soon. And it will pay you, in ability to say precisely what you mean. It is true that you may never attain the perfection of a scholar who spends his life in such study. But you will accomplish more than the girl who never tries at all. To aim high in anything—large or small—makes us shoot and hit higher than to put our mark lower down."

About Regular Exercise.

ONE of the most delightful fashions of the day is the freedom with which girls are going into all sorts of athletics. Golf, basket ball, and tennis, are the ordinary amusements of our girls. Riding, swimming, and rowing are their ordinary accomplishments. And it is quite common to find a girl who indulges in each of these exercises in turn, and does them all well.

Girls cannot be too thankful that they are living in this age of better ideas about women's training. To have plenty of breathing space and to be in possession of the full powers of one's body and limbs, is an abiding joy. It means greater health and happiness, and enlarged abilities. The girl of a generation or two ago, who could not hold herself up straight without an artificial support, and with feeble muscles, and badly balanced nervous organization, is a creature who is passing away. No one

is sorry to see her go. She leaves a successor worth a hundred of her.

Regular exercise, both in gymnasiums, and out of them, as well as out-of-door sports, and out-of-door living, is having its effect in the taller stature, better developed muscles, and more graceful movements, of the young girls of to-day. A gymnasium teacher gives this testimony: "One of the most noticeable effects of a regular physical training upon girls is to make them more graceful. People are awkward because they do not know how to use their limbs. When they are sure their movements are the right ones, they move freely, and that freedom is grace."

Regular physical training is arranged upon a certain system. Various exercises are used upon different parts, and upon each part, of the body, and then these exercises are gradually combined, until all the different parts of the body move smoothly and evenly together. The whole system improves under this training and strengthening of the muscles. The circulation is quickened by exercise, and takes on fresh

vigor the pores of the skin better perform their office of carrying off impurities, the skin becomes softer and the flesh firmer. Every function of the body is carried on with renewed activity. In a very short time the pupil shows the effect of the training, in her greater freedom of movement and lighter appearance. And the mind as well as the body, seems to grow fresher and stronger.

A girl taking up physical training should observe certain rules. Exercise should be taken regularly, not spasmodically. It should be begun with slight movements, and gradually increased to harder ones. It should always be proportioned to the strength of the individual. And it should never be taken to the "tired point."

When we begin to exercise long unused muscles, they are stiff, hard to move, and we feel the exertion of using them. But the soreness caused by the use of stiff or flabby muscles soon passes away. It but serves to notify us that our muscles have not been doing their full duty, and should learn to be more pliant. We should not

refuse to use them on this account. It probably cost each of us a few bumps to learn to walk. But it paid.

The training of the body is specially important for girls. Boys are apt to get bodily exercise without making a business of it, but girls have not so many opportunities for active play and their bodies should be trained as part of their education. If a girl has no opportunity for gymnasium teaching, she might get up a private class, and hire a teacher. A number of girls could work together, getting a formula for daily drill from some one with knowledge of the subject. There are always ways if one decides to look for them. It is not necessary to have apparatus. And any girl who is determined to develop her body need not be at all disheartened if it is not convenient to enter a gymnasium.

Girls do not deserve much of the ridicule they get for not knowing how to run, how to throw a ball, or how to use their bodies and limbs in any vigorous fashion. It never has been the custom to teach girls such things, or even to encourage or allow girls

to do them. Consequently, few women understand the full use of their bodily powers, as they might do with better training.

But, now-a-days, girls are expected and helped to take part in all active sport with their brothers. And it is much better that they should do properly the exercise they are taking. If they learn to use their bodies correctly, and not in a loose, inexact, or incorrect way, we can better determine what such training is worth to our girls.

Slang.

"OF course you do not approve of slang," said Mollie to me.

"I do not approve of the use of meaningless slang, and certainly I do not approve of slang that has vulgarity of word or suggestion in it. If the catch-word, or popular phrase—which is what you mean, I suppose—is really witty, and fits the occasion, it is sometimes very amusing, and a great deal of cleverness can be shown in its application."

"Oh," said Mollie, as if at a new thought. Then she added: "But I'm sure I have heard many people say, 'No well-bred girl is slangy.'"

"To be slangy is certainly very ill-bred, Mollie. I, too, think that a well-bred girl would not be slangy. But you did not understand me. I did not say that it was witty to be slangy, but that a slang expression might be applied wittily. The differ-

ence is whether you use a slang phrase occasionally, in some apt, and forcible way, or use slang expressions all the time, without any meaning whatever. One is senseless and silly, and may degenerate into vulgarity. The other may be a clever application of an ordinary phrase, and that constitutes wit."

"What does 'slang' mean, exactly?" asked Mollie.

"What is 'slang'? The current catch-words of the street constitute what we call 'slang.' Sometimes the expression is born in a theatre, or perhaps it was spoken at some great event, or it might have been the careless word of some well-known person. The newspapers take it up and reiterate it, the boys of the street repeat it, the school children shout it out at home and abroad. Soon all ranks and conditions of society epitomize their sentiments and hopes in the hackneyed words, making it mean anything, or merely saying it over parrot-like, without any meaning whatever. Perhaps it never did mean anything. Presently people tire of it, and some equally senseless

phrase, a little different, becomes the fashion."

"But you said some slang was clever," objected Mollie.

"Yes, some slang expressions are pithy and forcible. The whimsical aptness of their application by a bright speaker often provokes a smile. Who has not enjoyed a clever use of the phrase, 'It makes me tired!' We remember how often we have been tired by somebody's foolishness or stupidity. That is a mental tiredness that every one understands."

"Yes," nodded Mollie, catching my idea, "I have known several phrases that seem to express a great deal, just like that."

"Yes, and sometimes they sound clever. Not always. It depends entirely upon how they are applied. And remember that repetition spoils their effect. They will sound well the first time they are used. They become tiresome when used fifty times. Every one is not bright or quick enough to select exactly the right moment for a witty or neat use of a slang phrase. And simply to repeat the 'by-words' of the day without

giving them a fresh application is the ghastliest imitation of humor which the vacant mind can fall into. Yet many people, young and old, seem to think that the slang phrase is a joke in itself, and that the constant repetition of such phrases constitutes brilliant conversation."

"I think I understand that," smiled Mollie, "the cleverness is in the way it is applied."

"Yes. There is another careless way of talking, which is almost as bad as the use of meaningless slang. I mean the use of exaggerations, using extreme words for the veriest trifles of feeling, or the common and ordinary details of life. The girl who 'just dropped dead' whenever she heard a joke or was surprised, would have no words left to express the actual calamity, if it should happen. To some young people, every thing they dislike is 'rotten,' 'vile,' or 'fierce.' And whatever they fancy is 'fine' or 'splendid,' whether it is a hat or a sunset, a journey or a sermon. 'Awfully' is a very overworked adjective. It is a fad of some girls to employ one pet adjec-

tive, to the exclusion of others. I knew one girl to whom everything was 'precious' and another whose one descriptive expression was 'too sweet for anything.' The habit of employing strong words for unimportant things will often betray the speaker into absurdities, which would make her very uncomfortable could she hear how they sounded to others. The other day, I heard a bright-looking girl tell the grocer that his vegetables were 'simply vile.' She looked like a very dignified young woman, but she sounded like a very ignorant girl."

Mollie laughed.

"I do not insist that your conversation be limited to, 'Yea, yea, and Nay, nay,' but I do advocate a little more careful adaptation of words to ideas. Then an occasional extravagant or slang expression might sound picturesque, instead of silly or vulgar."

On Choosing Clothes.

"DOROTHY'S new hat is so pretty. If she don't mind, I am going to get one just like it," Mollie said to me, one day.

"Don't, my dear girl. Can you not find a pretty hat to suit you that will not be just like Dorothy's?"

"Why shouldn't I have one just like Dorothy's?"

"I have not seen the hat, Mollie, but I know that what may suit one style and face, may not suit another. Dorothy may look lovely in her hat, and you may look like a fright."

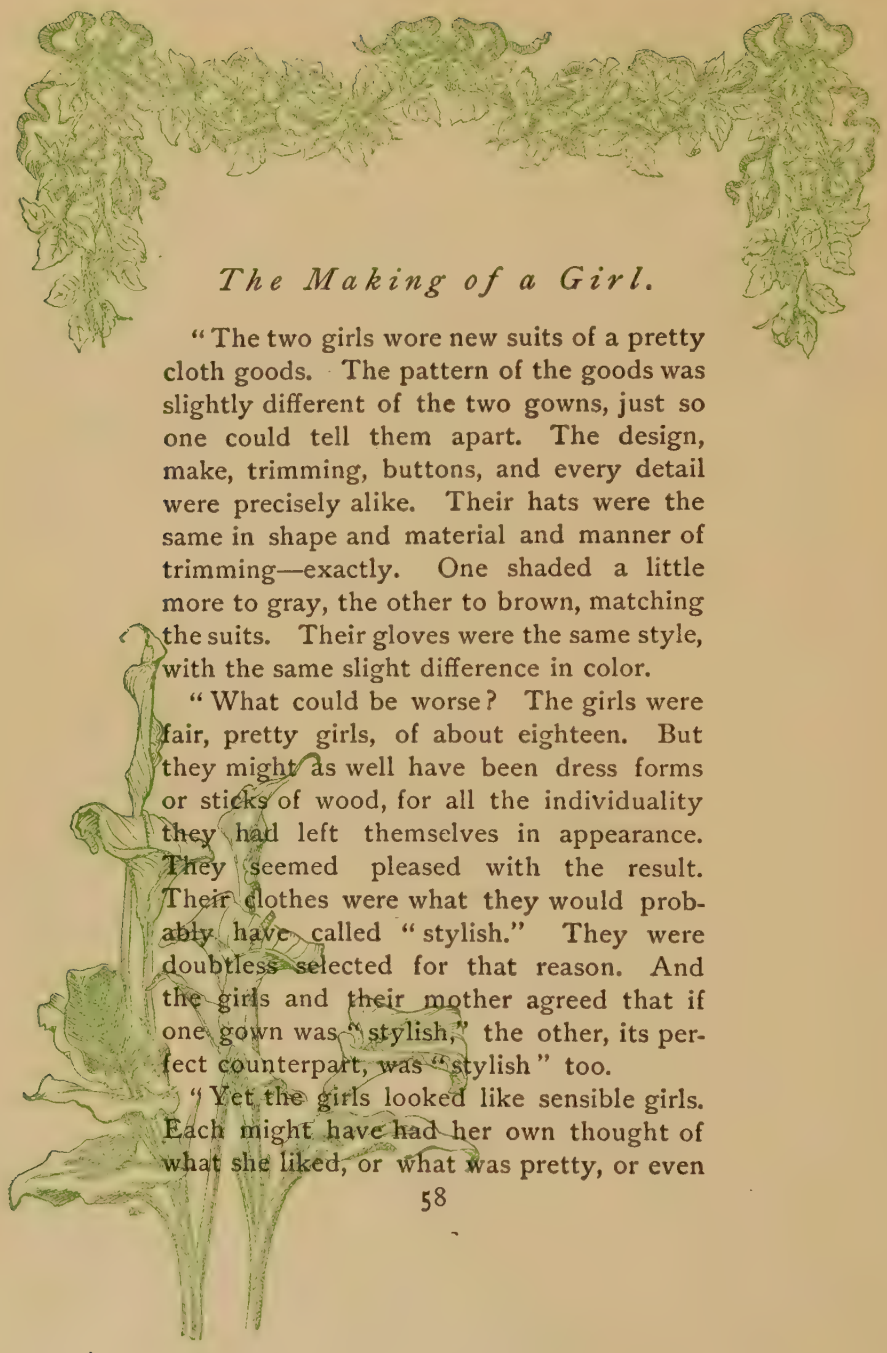
"Oh, no, I am sure I shall look well in it," insisted Mollie.

"But even if you do, that is no reason why you should duplicate Dorothy's hat. There are millions of hats in the world, and millions more can be made. Buy something which just suits your own self, which is

certainly different from Dorothy's self. Have some originality about your clothes. Don't buy an article of dress only because it is fashionable, or because some one you know has one. Buy it because it suits your style and your taste, and accords with the rest of your wardrobe.

"The other day I saw two young girls in an elevated train. Their mother and father were with them, and the family had evidently just provided themselves with new clothes, and were airing them for the first time. Perhaps the clothes had been bought at a fashionable shop, no doubt they cost a good sum of money, but they were as unsuitable for the people who wore them as they well could be.

"The mother was a placid, pleasant-looking woman of fifty or so. She wore a fancy wrap of the latest cut, adorned with much elaborate braiding. Her jet hat, covered with many upright feathers and bows, crowned her smoothly braided gray hair with a look of entire unappropriateness which would have been amusing if it were not also pathetic.



"The two girls wore new suits of a pretty cloth goods. The pattern of the goods was slightly different of the two gowns, just so one could tell them apart. The design, make, trimming, buttons, and every detail were precisely alike. Their hats were the same in shape and material and manner of trimming—exactly. One shaded a little more to gray, the other to brown, matching the suits. Their gloves were the same style, with the same slight difference in color.

"What could be worse? The girls were fair, pretty girls, of about eighteen. But they might as well have been dress forms or sticks of wood, for all the individuality they had left themselves in appearance. They seemed pleased with the result. Their clothes were what they would probably have called "stylish." They were doubtless selected for that reason. And the girls and their mother agreed that if one gown was "stylish," the other, its perfect counterpart, was "stylish" too.

"Yet the girls looked like sensible girls. Each might have had her own thought of what she liked, or what was pretty, or even

what was becoming. If she had, she had sacrificed it ruthlessly upon the altar of "style," and the consequence was frightful to contemplate. Perhaps they were twins; twins always seem to feel it a moral duty to dress alike; I do not know, but I never shall forget their appearance.

"I have often noticed the same peculiarity in two girls who were constant companions. Their clothes seemed copied from the same model, the difference being so slight as to be hardly noticeable. What one wore the other wished to wear. If Kate trimmed her winter coat with a velvet collar, cuffs, and bands, so must Alice. If Alice wore a short jacket and put astrakhan upon the collar, so must Kate.

"Now, it is most stupid and foolish to do this. Kate may look better in a long coat than a short one, and Alice may be prettier in a plainly made dress without trimming at all. In short, what is becoming to one may not at all suit the other. It is better to consult a little your own private likes and dislikes, in dress as in everything else. Do not be afraid to trust your own taste.

Wear nothing too eccentric or conspicuous, but never be afraid of appearing a little different from other girls.

"I hope that you usually select your clothes for one season of about the same colors, or of colors which will harmonize. For a girl who must practise economy in clothes buying, this is much the best plan. If you have only one jacket for the season, it would be disagreeable to have to wear with it skirts of a different color, crowned with a hat of still another tint. I remember a lovely heroine in some story I read long ago, who always wore certain colors on the street. I have always thought that this plan had great advantages, as your street clothes would then blend, or 'go' well together, and would not be so likely to look old-fashioned after their first season. But this would not be the case if you bought a striking color that was fashionable one season, and then found it was impossible to wear it with the fashionable color of the next year."

"Do you mean it is not well to buy a new-fashioned color at all?"

On Choosing Clothes.

"Not unless it is becoming, and really suits you, and you can make the rest of your wardrobe look well with it. Then it will remain pretty and be in good style even when its first 'vogue' has gone.

"But above all, be original in your dressing. Wear a color because it suits you and not because it is new.

"Choose a design for your gown which you like, which you think graceful and pretty, and do not be afraid to say so. This independence in little toilet matters is what creates originality in dress.

"There is nothing pleasanter nor brighter in a girl's appearance than a tasteful difference between her and all the rest of the girls. Originality is certainly a delightful quality to find in this commonplace world of ours, whether it appears in dress or in manners, in thought or in action."

A Small Talent.

"WHEN one can only do a very little thing," complained Mollie, "it seems foolish to try to do it at all."

She said this when I asked why she had lately dropped her practising.

"Why, I haven't very much of a voice," she complained. "I can never be a great singer, or even a moderately great one."

"You have hardly tried long enough to find out, have you?"

Mollie shrugged her shoulders. "Six months."

"It seems to me it is not ability you need, so much as a wish and a determination to succeed."

"What good will all the determination in the world do," asked Mollie, "unless one has great talent?"

"There's where you are wrong. A small ability may, by persistent work, attain much better results than great talent, without it.

Genius, you know, is said to be a capacity for taking infinite pains."

"Do you really think," asked Mollie, with a puzzled look on her face, and after a pause, "that one could become great in any line without a special talent for it?"

"I think you could do very well in any line without natural talent at all. And I think you often attain to a taste or liking, and an ability for your work, by working hard at it. Just as a man might find gold after long and weary digging, in places where he did not know gold existed, so, by hard work, you may discover an ability you did not know you had."

"But I could not become a famous singer just by hard work."

"Your small talent might not make you famous, no. But it could bring a great deal of pleasure to yourself and friends. There are many young people like you, who, having only a small ability, give up cultivating it entirely, with the excuse that it is too slight to amount to anything, and as they never can hope to be great musicians or writers, or painters, therefore the little talent

must stay unimproved. They 'wrap it up in a napkin.'

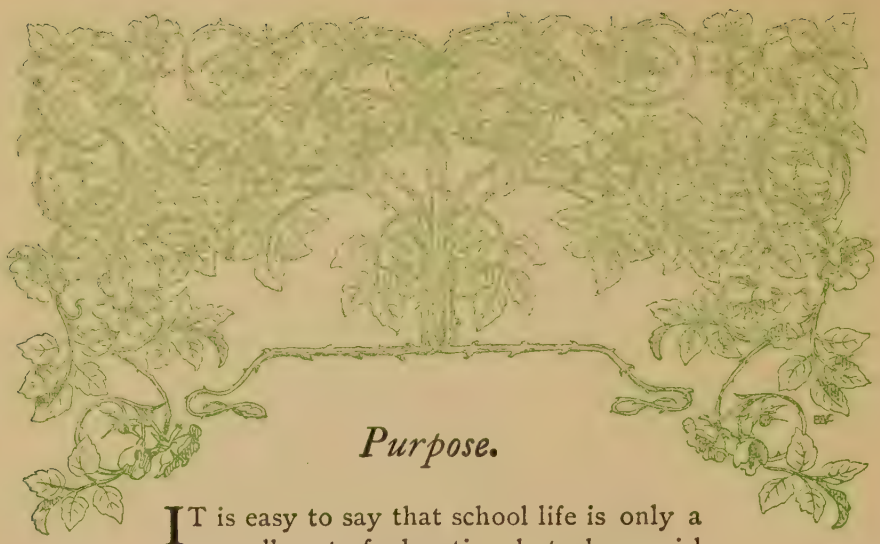
"Now there are several reasons why we should not wrap our one little talent up in a napkin, and hide it away. One reason is that it is our duty to use every ability we have, big or little, we should make the most of each gift we have. That is what our abilities were given us for. Another reason is a more practical one. The talent, or ability is usually greatly developed by cultivation, and often turns out much better than we expected, if we have been honest, and thorough in our work. And a still more practical reason is that we sometimes find ourselves possessed of some other ability while we are working at the first one.

"Did you ever hear the story of the man who lived in a country where water was scarce? He had to dig a very deep well to get the necessary supply for his family, and in digging that, he struck a vein of gold which made him rich, beyond his wildest expectations. He dug for water, and found gold. Talents, or abilities, are our hidden treasures. And in working to bring out one, we

may discover another. We never can be sure what mental treasure we do possess, until we put a little hard work into something. While it is true the smallness of the talent may forbid its possessor ever to stand at the top of the ladder, still it is also true that one-half of the ability to do a thing lies in the determination to do it. Faith and energy before now have moved mountains, or have enabled stout hearts to surmount them, which is the same thing.

"Pluck and hard work are better friends than genius. Your path may at first be difficult. You find yourself moving in a blind, uncertain way, but the road becomes easier and straighter, and the hindrances, which always come in the way of any determination, should serve only to inspire firmer resolves to overcome them.

"It is a true saying that 'We acquire the strength of the obstacles we overcome.' If you determine to develop, as far as possible, the small talent you have, you may find yourself, by and by, owning ten talents. That is Law and Gospel, too, Mollie."



Purpose.

IT is easy to say that school life is only a small part of education, but when a girl has left school, the matter does not at first present itself to her in this light. Her dominant feeling is a sense of relief from the routine and restrictions of the schoolroom, and her most earnest determination is to indulge herself in the amusements she has only been allowed to taste. So she idles away a year, or two, or three, or four years, perhaps, until, at the end of that time, she is likely to find herself an indolent, frivolous woman, with an empty present, and a barren outlook. And it is just this temptation to let life drift away without any clear thought as to what she shall make of it, that is the hardest obstacle to overcome to a lively girl with the schoolroom just behind her.

What such girls most lack is purpose. They leave school, not knowing what they wish to make of their lives. At the end of fifty years, if they live so long, all they have

found out is, that they haven't done what they could have done, and what they wish they had.

Then they are apt to blame anything and anybody except their own weakness, and idleness.

" If someone had only told me what to do," or, " something had only happened to give me a purpose in life. I could have done something with myself, then."

If she has married while in this unsettled state of mind, her chances of unhappiness have greatly multiplied, particularly if she married because it was easy to do so, or as a means of support. Unhappiness must surely come from a marriage entered into from such low motives. Only a few heaven-sent misfortunes can save her from becoming one of those mindless, spiritless wives and mothers of which the world is full. The prospect is an unpleasing one, surely, to the girl who thinks, and it is by thought only that she can avoid it. It is these careless girls, without purpose, who develop into women with aimless, wasted lives, whether they are married or single.

They began without any clear idea of what they wanted to do. They amused themselves, waiting for something to turn up, for some circumstance to make them into something different. The impetus, the always considered, must come from somewhere else. Their part was to wait and see. And they waited until they died, without finding any answer to the puzzle. They never tried to solve it by their own brains.

Now, the determining influence toward the best things in life does not come from without. A friend might advise you, or suggest some course, but you must make up your mind, yourself, what you want to be in life, and think seriously how to accomplish your desire.

Vague yearnings are not enough. They never helped anyone to a noble, purposeful life. There must be a definite purpose, and a strong mental determination. You must begin yourself, entirely yourself. After you have started to work, help will come to you. Usually it comes by some strange way, some happening that helps you

toward your goal. That is because your definite purpose, held firmly, is a magnet, that draws to you the help you need.

There was a general once, and he became a very celebrated one, who took for his motto as a young man:

"You can be whatever you resolve to be."

I do not know that this general resolved first to be a successful general. I know that he did first resolve to be a noble, high-minded, honorable man. Afterward, the training of his peculiar mental gifts led him to the place he occupied. There is no doubt that his abilities inclined him to his later career, and that training them to their utmost extent, his career was not an accident, but the outcome of a purpose, the inception of which was the thought which made the young man declare: "You can be whatever you resolve to be."

And, in the same way, any girl may make her resolve, and live it out.

Your mental determination will bring to light powers and talents in yourself you hardly knew before. It will open to you a world of thought and endeavor which will

give you joy in its finding, and a thousand joys in its development. An aim in life, work, and hope, and satisfaction, and success, will surely come to the girls who resolve to get these best things, and who shape their lives to a purpose.

Regularity.

WHEN Mollie complains that she has "no time to do this," or "no time to do that," I sometimes say to her:

"A little more regularity, dear, would make more time. Don't you think so?"

"I suppose it would," is Mollie's rather perfunctory answer. But, still, I notice she has the same painful lack of time.

When one's store of time is about half spent, one learns to become more economical with it. I have found that there is nothing which so assists one to get through with a great amount of work—or play, either, girls—as regularity. You may call it order, punctuality, promptness, or what you will; all these are included in the virtue of which I speak. And by it, I mean an orderly disposition of our time, so that we may get the greatest amount of good out of our twenty-four hours a day. I think the chief reason why certain people are always short of time is that they do not allow a definite

portion of time for each thing they want to do. They are constantly taking on extra work, extra duties, and extra pleasures, with the vague idea that these can be done "somehow" in "odd minutes," but as no regular time is ever allotted to their accomplishment, they are apt to get done "nohow," and the foolish doer is continually engaged in a mad chase to catch the "odd minutes" needed for the work.

Now a great deal can be done in odd minutes; that is true. And the wonderful tales one has heard of learning a language while riding down town on a train each day, or, of reading a large amount of history in a year by taking ten minutes each day while waiting for dinner, have a great deal of truth in them.

But you will please mark one peculiarity of all these stories: It was a definite time that was taken. There was no delay in looking for the book or the writing materials. When the time came, everything was ready, and the worker knew just what he was going to do, and how he was going to do it.

Regularity.

A successful literary man once said to me: "Everything takes a certain amount of time," and the saying has helped me often to get through a very great amount of work. Arranging time in an orderly manner, each new piece of work is assigned a certain day in the week, and a certain time in that day. Nothing can be successfully done that is done "sometime," "any time," or "when I get time." It must be done at one particular time, and when that particular time comes, systematically and persistently.

It is just by such a regular order and system that a great many different kinds of work can be undertaken, and in the course of the year a mass of work can be successfully finished—just by an orderly disposition of the hours and half-hours of each day.

The plan is not very new, of course. Not long ago some genius wrote an article—or a book, I forget which—called "Twenty-six Hours a Day." At least, that was the idea. The author argued that, by proceeding quickly from one piece of work to another without dawdling or idling between, we could really get twenty-six hours' good out

of our twenty-four. Each of us has twenty-four hours a day, you know; and that is all the day contains. None of us has a right to grumble at not having time enough; we have got all there is and all that any one else has got; and it only remains to use our capital to the very best advantage.

Now, I do not believe it is best to be greedy, and insist upon having twenty-six hours in each day when other people are only allowed twenty-four. But I would like to convince you that you are entitled to the whole of the twenty-four hours, and that by spending a few minutes—while you are trying to open your eyes in the morning, for instance—in determining how best to arrange your day, you can actually do more and enjoy more than if you should spent a half-hour after each employment to decide the next.

I do not advise you to get breathless or excited in a mad chase to accomplish more or greater things than another each day. I believe this driving, nervous activity is the curse of our American women, and be it far from me to tempt you to begin it while you

are young. Nor do I advise you to undertake more work, or pleasure, or exercise, than you can healthfully accomplish, or can easily put into your waking hours. "The busy person," 'tis said, "always has the most time;" which means she knows exactly how much time she has to spend, just how much is engaged, and just how much she has left to use. But order does not conduce to hurry. Regularity tends to ease and peace of mind. We know what we are going to do, and when we shall begin it; and we are not rushing through our present work to begin a future one sooner than its proper time. We finish well what we are about; and the girl who allows herself just the proper amount of time for what she does, and always five minutes for accidents, is not the girl who misses a boat or a train, or who forgets to mend her glove, or sew a button on her shoe, until someone is waiting for her downstairs.

It is good to keep the domestic machine well oiled with regularity; and if your part of the machine labors and squeaks, how can the whole body of it run well?

Blessed Ignorance.

MOLLIE walked slowly back into the room where I sat, after shutting the front door after Lotta. She twitched the cushions in place, and then sat down hard upon them, pushing them crooked again.

"Did you hear what Lotta was saying? Sometimes I wonder if she really does know as much as she pretends."

"Oh, yes, I heard her," I answered, amusedly. "I sat in the corner most of the time she was talking."

"No matter what anyone talks about, she looks and speaks as if she knew all about it."

"And do you think she really does know all about everything, Mollie?"

"It don't seem as if she could." Mollie considered.

"She may be ashamed to appear ignorant, and acts and talks as if she knew all about

it, when she really does not know any more than you do yourself."

"That's what I think, because it would be queer if she had read so many books, and understood so many subjects. She is just my age, you know, and I'm sure," with a sigh, "I don't know so much."

"My dear little girl. I'm so glad you don't know so much. I'm so doubly glad you know you don't. I'm so trebly glad to hear you acknowledge you don't!"

Mollie laughed.

"Do you think I ought to be glad to be ignorant?" she asked.

"I think it is a thousand times better to frankly confess ignorance, than to cover it up with assumed wisdom."

"Isn't it better to pretend to know things just a little than to let folks think you so awfully ignorant?" asked Mollie, with a dubious air.

"Who, among those who listen to Lotta, airing her great knowledge of every subject on earth, believes in her, do you think?"

"I don't think many people do."

"No one less ignorant than herself does,

you may be sure. She imposes only on companions who don't know any more than she really does."

"Not always on those," giggled Mollie. "Some of the girls always laugh at her, when they hear her talk like that."

"Exactly. Then she does not even impose on people as ignorant as she is. And the most profound feeling she arouses in one who is wiser, is—pity."

"Pity?"

"Surely. They think: 'Poor girl. Why is she not willing to enjoy her rights?'"

"Her rights?"

"Certainly. She is sixteen, isn't she? Now, at sixteen what more blessed right has she than to be ignorant?"

"And you think—"

"I think, dear, that it takes us poor mortals forty, fifty, sixty years of thought, and work, and suffering, to learn the things which Lotta would have us believe she knows all about at sixteen. There are other girls like Lotta, who speak as if they had had years of experience, and knew all that there was to find out."

"Yes, she does talk like an old woman."

"Do you not see, my dear, that such girls not only can't know as much in sixteen years as they can in sixty, but that people don't expect them to do it? And don't you see, further, what frightfully disagreeable as well as unnatural girls they would be if they could do it?"

"They would be old while they were young, I suppose."

"Yes, and very unpleasantly old, indeed. It is delightful to be young, and to enjoy your youth, and to leave older subjects until you come to them. We are old so much longer than we are young, my dear. Lotta always makes me think of a little hard, green apple, that had tried to be an apple too soon, and never could get beyond the hard, green stage."

Mollie shook her head at me, and made a mocking courtesy.

"So—you like me to be foolish and giggley, and not know anything—"

"Oh, you're learning things fast enough, Mollie, my dear. Just keep on being sweet, and loving, and unselfish, as you are now.

And never stop learning all that you can, but be willing to do it slowly, and never, never try to make any one think you know more than you really do."

"Yes——"

"And the knowledge will surely come in the fullness of time. Let wisdom linger, my dear. It is her way to come slowly, and we older ones who know that, refuse to believe in the reality of that which is premature. The pink and white blossom has a right to be admired and enjoyed as a blossom. Not only it can't be an apple now, and it must lose it's present beauty before it does, but if it strains too hard to hurry to be an apple, before nature is ready for the change, it's petals fall off, it's loveliness is gone and it is worthless alike as blossom and fruit."

Travelling.

SUPPOSE a traveller wishes to start to a distant country. He goes to the best authorities and finds out exactly what is the best way to go—the only safe and certain road. Then he thinks the matter out, and he sees that these people are right. Maps and books, all authorities, and his own common sense combine to tell him of the only sure road to reach that country. Each of them informs him, also, that the way is long and arduous, and that he must suffer many hardships and privations before he can reach his destination.

But he says to himself: "I want to reach that country. I have made up my mind to do it, and I believe the reward of getting there will pay me for the toil. So I will start."

But the traveller waits and doesn't start at first. He travels around a little to amuse himself, but he takes care to go in easy and

pleasant directions. He never makes any serious or determined effort to start for the place he ultimately means to reach. Yet by and by he begins to say to himself, "Dear me, it's a most extraordinary thing that in all my travelling about I never get to the country I started for." What would you think of that man? You would think that a silly speech? Exactly; so would I.

And suppose, some day, he should say: "Well, I really will start for the place I intend to go to. It is rather singular that I haven't got there yet, but I mean really to try to get there this time." So this time he makes a move. He sets out in the proper direction he has been told to go, and feels quite a glow of satisfaction that he is right at last.

After a while the road begins to get hard and tiresome. Now, this is exactly what our traveller has been led to expect. You would think, of course, that the fact would encourage him, because it would be a sign that he was going in the proper direction. You would think that he would go on all the faster, being cheered and helped by the

conviction that the more difficulties he surmounted, and the quicker he conquered them, the sooner he would arrive at his journey's end and reach the desired haven.

Nothing of the kind. The traveller of whom we are speaking grows disgusted immediately. "Gracious," he exclaims, "I don't want to travel any such rugged and stupid road as this! There must be some mistake. There is an easy and pleasant by-path around this hill instead of over it. *I will go back to this other road.*"

So the traveller turns off to the easy and pleasant by-paths. They may be easy and pleasant for a little way. But the easiest of them has just one fatal defect. *It does not lead to the place to which the traveller wishes to go.*

But after a while the traveller says: "It is a most extraordinary thing I never seem to arrive at the country for which I am bound. What can the reason be?"

You would think, doubtless, as I do, that such a man was a fool. You would say that if all authorities, every one else's experience, and his own convictions told him he

should go in one direction and he went in another, he must be a madman to expect to get where he wanted to go. And you would be right.

"And did he ever get to the end of his journey?" asked Mollie, interested in the story.

"He did if he stuck to the right road," said I, "even though the road might be hard and disagreeable. But he would be foolish to expect to get there if he didn't. Don't you think so?"

"Oh, of course," said Mollie.

"Well."

"Well—" Mollie repeated, "tell me the meaning of your little story."

"My little parable means this:

"In our hearts the Spirit of Truth has put a conviction of what the truth is. What it tells us is in unison with the best authorities, and agrees with the experience of every one whose opinion is worth having. And it tells us that the way to arrive at happiness and satisfaction is to follow its dictates.

"We know—we surely know—that to be loved we must be loving. We know that

we must be truthful and just, although it is to our own hurt. We know that if we do wrong we must suffer for it, and if we do right, although the way may be hard, yet good will come from it by and by. We know that we must be kind, and helpful, and forbearing, and forgiving. And that if we are not these things, we cannot expect the happiness which comes with them.

"We preach all these well-known truths to other people, speaking of them as 'infallible laws.' And in our own lives we break and try to ignore these laws every day.

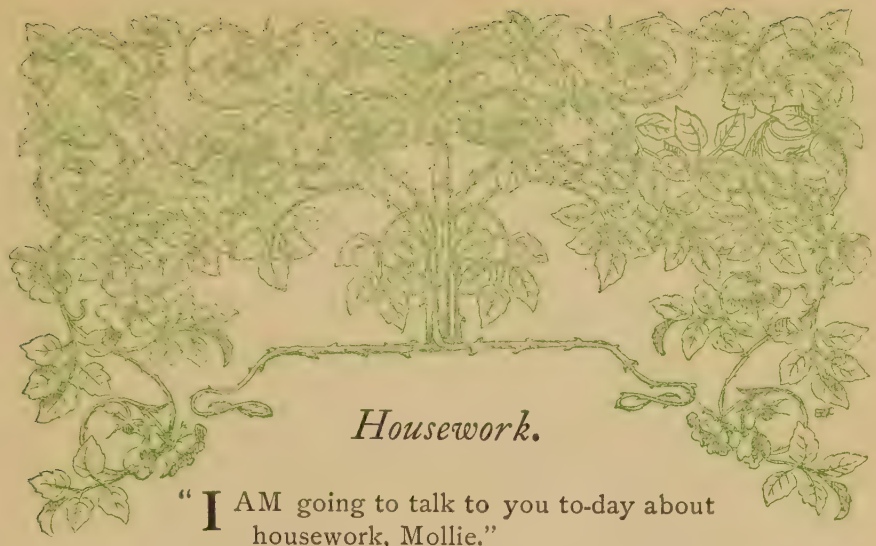
"We are in the habit of calling these truths 'abstract truths,' and our principal idea of them is that they are entirely 'abstract' in our case, and not operative at all. We think that our belief can be one thing and our daily life another. We think that we can believe in and acknowledge a truth, and refuse to act according to it, and while we live in this one-sided and false fashion, we wonder constantly that we do not get ahead. We wonder that life is so poor and unsatisfying. We wonder why we are unhappy and unfortunate, and we never think

that because we have not taken the right road to get what we want is the only reason why we have not got it.

"We wonder why our fellows are not kinder and more considerate, and we forget that we have never been particularly kind to them. We wonder that the law of supply does not give us all we need, and we forget that we have ourselves shut off the operation of that law by not becoming a source of supply, as far as is in our power. We have not even tried seriously to be worth the 'more' that we want. We wonder why life has not been a success, and we forget that success must come according to law, and not against it.

"All the while, we knew in our hearts what was the right way—we even acknowledged mentally that it was the right way, but we took another way, because it was easier, and afterward passed our time wondering why we did not realize our desires.

"Now, what do you think of the man who refuses to live according to the law, and yet expects the happiness which was promised if the law was followed? What do you think of such people?"



Housework.

"I AM going to talk to you to-day about housework, Mollie."

"Oh, I hate housework," says Mollie, with a shrug of her shoulders.

"I think, perhaps, you mean that you hate the way in which housework is done, don't you?"

"I mean there is nothing pleasant or entertaining in dusting, or sweeping, setting tables, or clearing them. Sometimes I wonder if these things won't be done in some better and easier way some day. Improvements are made in everything else, why don't people make improvements in ways of doing housework?"

"That is just it. Housework is a very practical subject, but perhaps we can make it more interesting if we consider it from a mental standpoint. That is what brains are for, you know, to apply to our work, in order to help us to do it better."

"There don't seem to be much brain work about housework."

"No, there does not seem to be very much, but if any art needs brains applied to it, I think it is housework. And the subject of my talk is not to tell you the proper way to cook, and sweep, but to speak of the relation which every woman, young and old, bears to housework, and to suggest some ideas by which housework may be made lighter.

"It is not too much to say that housework always was and always will be. Eve kept house in a delightful Garden of Eden fashion, after which we may enviously sigh, but cannot copy. And the last woman, doubtless, will keep house in some advanced and quite as enviable style. For as long as the world lasts, and men and women live in it, there will be homes and houses to be kept, and all sorts of domestic duties to be regulated.

"Now the art of housekeeping—in which name I include all domestic arts, from the lowest to the highest, from the scrubbing and washing, which is the lowest form of manual labor, to the deepest scientific and

social questions which go to the ordering of an agreeable and perfect home—this wonderful art of housekeeping is not all that it might be, by any means. Much of the work of it we keep on doing in the hardest and dearest way, just as we women have kept on doing it for generations.

"There are women every day sinking under duties a better understanding of which would show us to be either unnecessary, or to be done in a much easier and cheaper way. There are improved methods of doing everything upon earth that is needed for the use and pleasure of mankind. And still the arts of domestic life seem to drag along in the cumbersome and soul-and-body-grinding manner of a hundred years ago.

"Now, there are women who are waking up to see these things—women who are saying to themselves: 'Somebody has got to tackle these questions; somebody has got to find newer and better and easier ways of doing housework of all sorts, and of solving the questions of social and domestic economy which nearly every woman has to solve in some way or other—and if somebody, *why*

not I?' The better educated, the higher cultured, the more far-seeing a woman is, the closer the question is pressed upon her. 'I must make, and help my sisters to make some unravelling of these necessary questions, if for nothing else that I may make time in my life for other things!"

"Now there is another thing as certain as that there will always be housekeeping to be done, and that is, that the girls of to-day are to be the housekeepers and mothers of the next generation. Then these domestic problems will become their business. Therefore the question to them should be a live one, whether they will learn enough of the matter to help to solve it, and so simplify their own life problem, or whether they will shirk such questions until they find themselves thrown into the midst of housekeeping (a position which may fall upon any girl at any time), and then continue in the same pottering old style that their great-grandmothers did.

"For the point, girls, is this: To learn to do the smallest work properly does not mean that we stop there, and keep on doing

that. Oh, no! That is only the first step. Don't you know that the man who has the broadest and keenest knowledge of the management of a great business, and of the best methods of conducting affairs, is the man *who can go to any part of the shop and make any tool used in the work of the manufacturing interests of which he is the head?* He began by learning the lowest form of work, but he did not stay *there.* It was only the first step.

"You must understand present methods of doing things, in order to make improvements in those methods, just as the man of whom I told you learned all he could about machinery, before he was able to study the art of improving it.

"Just as earnestly as I recommend you to 'learn how' the meanest and smallest detail of housework should be done, so I beg of you not to stop there and do it. Learn next ways of simplifying housework, successful ways of employing other people to do housework, and then ways by which every housekeeper in the land can have housework accomplished in one-half the

time and by one-half the expenditure of strength and money.

"These are the vital questions which women of to-day are waking up to study. They are the questions which *you* will have to faceby and by, whether you wish it or not.

"Among the girls of to-day are—somewhere—the women who are going to help us by and by, to a solution of the housework problem. Why should not one of them be you?"

The Practical.

THE best test to which we can subject any belief or theory in this world is the practical test—the question as to whether what we believe is of any practical value in our own lives and in the lives of others. "Abstract" truths are all very well; but if they must remain forever "abstract" they are useless, so far as we are concerned. If a truth cannot be lived, worked out, proved in a lifetime, it is of no real value, and indeed is not likely to be a truth at all, but most probably will turn out a fine-appearing falsehood. For each human life has infinite possibilities, and among them is opportunity for the practical demonstration of each truth which the mind can conceive.

We cannot prove everything we believe at once or in a very short time; but if we believe anything earnestly and sincerely, we must be willing to have our belief subjected to severe tests. If it is worth anything, it can stand any test; if it is not, we should

discard it, and should be willing to have its falsehood shown.

Any earnest belief is our religion, whether such belief be a trust in God, a confidence in our own sincere wish to do right, or a deep love and desire to express helpfulness to our fellow-creatures. Each of those creeds is a religion which must be vital to be of any practical use to us at all. If we trust God, we must feel sure we trust Him, and act as if we did. We must know with absolute knowledge that He is willing and able to justify our trust. We cannot trust Him with our lips and deny the trust with our lives.

If we have confidence in our sincere wish to do right, we need not be constantly fearful lest we should do wrong and make mistakes. We wish to do right; we know we wish it. We are willing to forego pleasure and profit for the sake of right. Therefore, there is no need of acting as if our creed was not a real one, by trembling lest we be led to do wrong. Those who wish to do right cannot do wrong, and have no need, with tremblings, to deny their religion.

The Practical.

We love and have a desire to help our fellow-creatures. Therefore we will do so, and our part is to find the way. We believe one way to be right; therefore, granting our love and desire to help to be sincere, that way *is right*, and we have but to follow it out to find that our religion was a real one, and that the way we took was the way we ought to have taken to prove it.

Faith first. Then casting out fear, the best works we can do to prove our faith. That is the way to show your belief a practical one. If you are not willing to live your belief, do not profess it. To be worth anything, each of your actions must have it's foundation in a real, practical, vital truth. If it does not, it would be worth nothing. Faith, sincerity, love, and helpfulness are real things, needing real actions to express them, but real things in themselves, even before they are expressed, while they are burning in a human heart.

A trust in God is real; and when the time comes, the heart that feels it deeply will express it. A wish to do right is real, and a right action will be the outcome. A

desire to help is real; and when the opportunity comes, the help will be ready. Each of these things are and must be practical, or they are worthless, and if we are not willing to prove them and stand by them, it would be more honest to deny them altogether and so make our creed and life agree.

Starting backward over the same ground, we find that every outside or "physical" fact has a deep mental and moral meaning. And when we begin to study and find deep truths under common things, we wonder how much may underlie the ordinary things of life and stay there unsuspected.

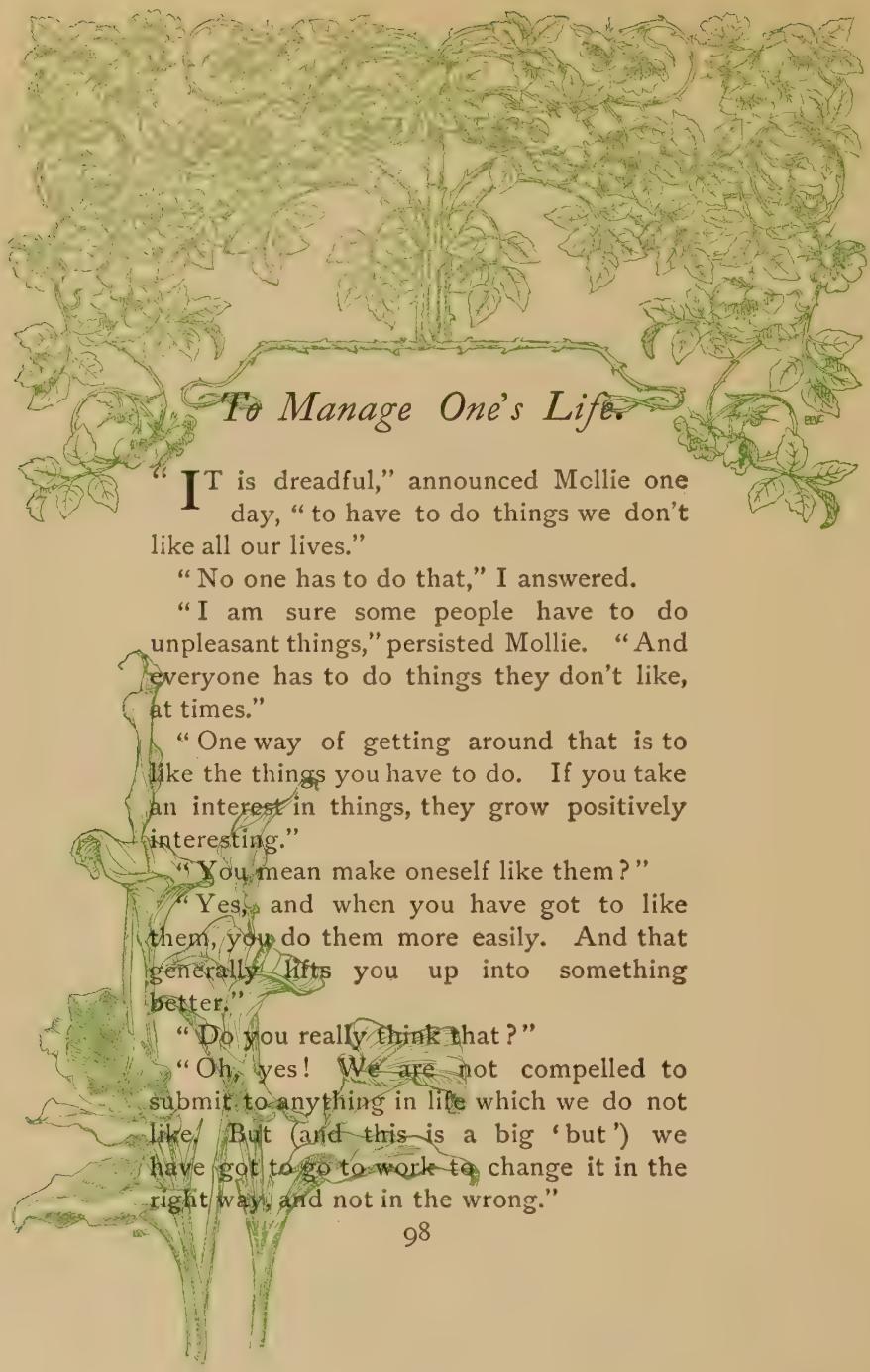
Take a familiar thing—fire. We find out that fire can brighten and warm us. We appreciate its use. We know it can be used for higher purposes yet—to separate dross from pure gold and slag from valuable metal. It takes skilled and fine workmanship, but under such care it can and does "purify."

It has its dangers: it can burn us if we are careless; it may destroy the metal if the chemist is not particular. It can accomplish the highest results, if its work is well done.

The Practical.

The "fire" of suffering brightens our lives by forcing us to see more clearly and perhaps by making us find out the warmth of human affections. Such "fire" has its use. It is used for higher purposes yet. It separates our faults and foolishness from the purer and better parts of our nature; it helps us to discard the old vices and to rise above each temptation, and it "purifies" our hearts, making them burn and glow, with every unworthy feeling cast out, until only the purest love remains. Ah! only a "real" thing could do that, and "fire" is a real thing all the way through.

Each thing that comes to us and each thing we meet in our daily life we should prove, and, bringing it to the practical test, hold fast to the thing we find good.



To Manage One's Life.

"IT is dreadful," announced Mollie one day, "to have to do things we don't like all our lives."

"No one has to do that," I answered.

"I am sure some people have to do unpleasant things," persisted Mollie. "And everyone has to do things they don't like, at times."

"One way of getting around that is to like the things you have to do. If you take an interest in things, they grow positively interesting."

"You mean make oneself like them?"

"Yes, and when you have got to like them, you do them more easily. And that generally lifts you up into something better."

"Do you really think that?"

"Oh, yes! We are not compelled to submit to anything in life which we do not like. But (and this is a big 'but') we have got to go to work to change it in the right way, and not in the wrong."

"What do you mean by the right way, and the wrong way?"

"The wrong way is this: I heard a school teacher say one day, 'I hate my work. I always disliked children, and now I can't bear to see them come in the morning, and I hurry them out of the door in the afternoon. I must teach, I suppose, but I hate it and I always shall.'

"Now a spirit of hatred of the work we have to do never helped anyone to get into something better. It antagonizes everyone around. We must like the work before we can leave it with honor. That seems to be the condition of graduation."

"Like going to a school, you mean?"

"Yes, something like that. One way to change the work is to do it so well that we get 'promoted' into a higher grade of it; just as a child is promoted at school, when he has thoroughly learned the lessons of one class. This is a very sure way for those of determined minds, for, when we have reached a certain degree of proficiency, we can promote ourselves by taking up a higher or a better class of work.

"Another way of getting into more congenial work or circumstances is: To take up some work which will lead us into better or better-liked conditions, or more congenial surroundings; doing the new work in addition to the old, and dropping the old when we have become expert in the new."

"Now how could I get out of clearing out my bureau-drawers?" asked Mollie, suddenly.

"Do you really dislike it very much?"

"Indeed I do. Tell me how to do something better?"

"Well, you might keep them in such beautiful order that those who behold them will say: 'Mollie clears up bureau-drawers so well, that she may take charge of all the bureau-drawers in the house—"

"But that isn't getting out of it!"

"And the next thing would be: 'Mollie is so orderly and neat that she could direct the work of the whole house. She can teach Mary or Bridget to clear the bureau-drawers. She can do something better.'"

"That might take a long time," Mollie said, solemnly.

"Oh, yes, it might."

"You mentioned another way."

"Another way would be to take up some other work, and become so expert in it that you might be allowed to drop the clearing up, and do the more useful work."

"I think I'll try one of those ways," said Mollie.

"You believe that principles should be put into practice, do you not?"

"Why, yes! What use is it to believe a thing unless you do it?"

"True, dear. That is what a faith is for—to be worked out."

"And you can't even tell it is a true thing until you try it," went on Mollie.

"True, again. I am very glad you think that. And remember that you must always put into your work these thoughts: That you wish to do right, that you are willing to work at something, and that you have a right to aspire to higher work so soon as you have done what has been given you well, and you have found the proper way to change. Not by hatred and an antagonistic spirit, but by love and cheerful, constant effort do we grow from a lower plane to a higher."

Self-Teaching.

SELF-TEACHING is an art which we probably have to learn each for ourselves —that is, we have to learn how to teach ourselves; for each of us has to "learn" after a different manner, and the methods which are successful with one person do not always answer with another.

But it takes the whole experience of a lifetime to learn any one thing thoroughly. And a knowledge of one's self, and of how best to teach one's self, are not exempt from this rule. So if we waited until we knew perfectly how best to teach ourselves, we would wait, practically, forever. We have got to do a great deal blindly. And the best way to look at it seems to be that to make experiments, and sometimes "mistakes," is only a part of the higher discipline.

Each of you girls is aware—partly from being told so, partly because you begin to

see it yourselves—that your school life is a very small part of your education. You are to "learn," all your lives. Your school-life was meant mainly to teach you methods of order, and to so train your minds, by subjecting them to habits of regularity and system in your work, that you could proceed with your learning without a teacher, after you had left school or college.

These are truths which you hear, and of which you have a certain understanding.

But perhaps you do not accept the "educational" idea literally. You may think that it is only "life and its lessons" which are to supplement the going to school as children. And to a certain extent you are right, since we learn so long as we are in the world, and when we have learned our last lessons in this world, know nothing more surely than that our "education" is not yet finished.

But the self-teaching of which I would speak is a literal, practical, and everyday matter. Our higher education is conducted always, whether we will or not, by a higher Power than ourselves, and it is reasonable

to infer that the teacher must naturally know more than the pupil. But the every-day training of our minds and our bodies after we leave school is something which is largely in our own control. At all events, we must act as if this were so, whether we believe it or not.

To begin with, no girl on leaving school would like to think that she must know no more at the end of her life than she did upon the day she graduated. She would not like to think that her mind at forty would be no broader or better developed than the mind of a girl at eighteen. But if all work—and by that I mean improving, educating study, and reading, and thinking—if all such learning as this were dropped, that is exactly what would happen. The mind of the mature woman would contain no more knowledge of the arts or sciences, of history or political economy, of the great problems of society or of the world, than the undeveloped mind of the girl whose horizon was bounded by the limits of her school life.

Exactly the same result might be foreseen if the girl in whose training "physical cul-

ture" or exercise had played a large part should suddenly stop all bodily exercise, and confine herself to the house or the sofa, wisely concluding that, her education being finished, she had had enough bodily training to keep her in health and perfect physical condition for the rest of her life.

Suppose she should think: "I am supple, athletic and healthy. I shall not need any more exercise all my life."

What would happen to such a reasoner? Why, she would get stiff, and undeveloped, or even bedridden, if she kept up her course to its logical conclusion. For when we come down to such a plain practical illustration as this, we perceive another truth, that if we do not go forward, we inevitably go backward. If we do not do something constantly to develop our bodies, they will not only stay undeveloped, but will get old and stiff and helpless with all speed. And just so, if we do not do something to develop our minds, they not only remain undeveloped, but fall into an inert, helpless, and childish condition.

And—sad to say—this is the condition

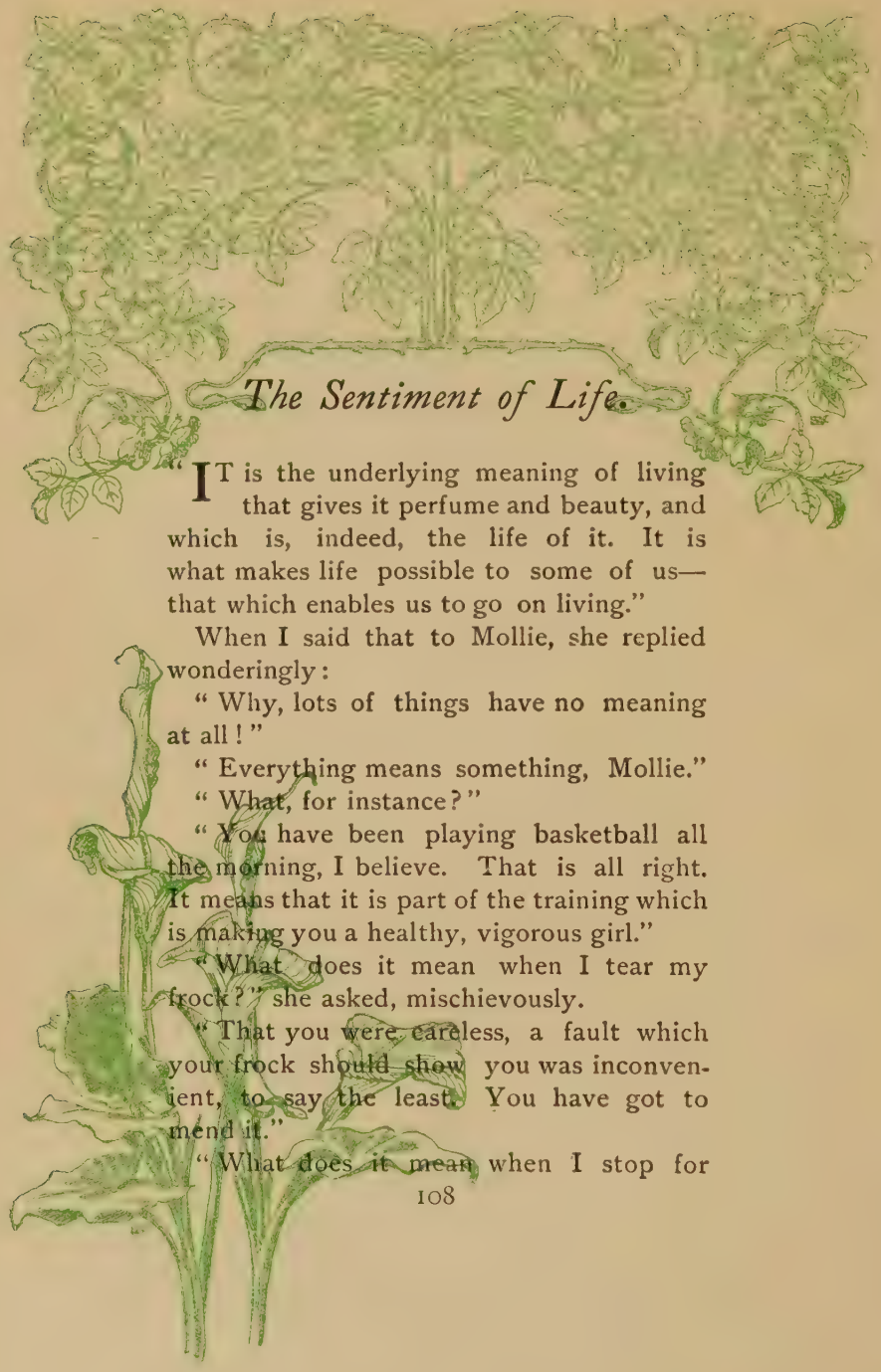
which the great majority of women have accepted in the past, as the natural result of being a woman, and as the woman's inevitable destiny. And some day a little boy comes and asks his mother a question in arithmetic, or history. And she has to confess that she doesn't know the answer.

"Oh, yes, I studied history and arithmetic once, but I have forgotten all about it!"

Let each bright girl of to-day whose mind and body have been trained according to the new and improved methods in vogue, look among her older women acquaintances, and perceive the truth of these statements. And then let her put to herself the question: "Do I wish, at that age, to be such a woman? Or do I wish to go on, and become the woman I might be, if I make the best use of the ways I have been taught?"

This question is a vital one to each girl who has recently left school, with her mind only just waked up to a knowledge of how much there is to learn. It is important to her whether she means to adopt a profession, or work in some humbler way to make

her living, or whether she feels herself justified in living a life of idleness and amusement. And she should consider it fairly, and answer it soberly; for the girls of today have so much in their power, that no mark which they set for themselves is too high, if they have determination and courage to work.



The Sentiment of Life.

"IT is the underlying meaning of living that gives it perfume and beauty, and which is, indeed, the life of it. It is what makes life possible to some of us—that which enables us to go on living."

When I said that to Mollie, she replied wonderingly:

"Why, lots of things have no meaning at all!"

"Everything means something, Mollie."

"What, for instance?"

"You have been playing basketball all the morning, I believe. That is all right. It means that it is part of the training which is making you a healthy, vigorous girl."

"What does it mean when I tear my frock?" she asked, mischievously.

"That you were careless, a fault which your frock should show you was inconvenient, to say the least. You have got to mend it."

"What does it mean when I stop for

Dorothy?" asked Mollie, going on with her catechism.

"That means a friendliness for Dorothy, I think. You are fond of her, are you not?"

"Oh, yes. But I sometimes quarrel with her, Auntie. And sometimes, I do say horrid things—things I am ashamed of, too."

"Ah, yes, Mollie, that shows a number of things. That you are impulsive, and quick-spoken, and that you know your faults, and wish to mend them, and that you have a real regard for Dorothy. I think, too that it shows that Dorothy is of a gentle and forgiving disposition. And when you know that, it should make you ask yourself if you should not control yourself more than you do."

"Yes, I should," cried penitent Mollie, "and Dorothy is a dear. But it is queer that everything should mean something."

"If you would think over your own actions for one whole day, Mollie, you would see what I mean to show you. If living meant only a struggle to get a little better bread and butter and a few finer clothes, we might as well call ourselves animals, or

clothes-horses, and be done with it. It is the spirit of the words we say which gives them a good or an evil influence; it is the motive with which the action is done which makes the action itself of importance, and it is the meaning, the sentiment underlying life, which makes life itself valuable."

"But we could not stop every minute," cried Mollie, "to think what each word meant, or what each little thing we do meant."

"No, you could not stop long to think over each little trifle. But if you lived in the meanings, dear, instead of in the things, there would be no need to stop at all. If you always thought about being kind, the kind words would jump right out of the kind thoughts. If you always felt sorry for unkind speeches, you would sometimes say so."

"I do, sometimes," ingenuously.

"Yes, and you did not have to think over the apology a long time beforehand, did you?"

"Oh, no, I said it because I thought it, without stopping."

"Exactly, then try always to help the matter at its beginning. Try to keep thinking the kind thought, the helpful thought, the generous thought. Then the kind, helpful, generous acts and speeches come out of themselves without stopping at all. When we want to make a muddy brook clear, what do we do? We go to the spring at the beginning of it. The water flows from that. Just so your words and actions flow out of your thoughts. See, therefore, that the thoughts are right. Then the actions and words must be so. Begin at the fountain-head, the spring of your life."

Mollie listened, and her thoughtful face showed that she understood me, while I went on:

"It seems a far cry from the tiny action of to-day to the grand meaning of all life. But the famous picture is composed of little strokes, and the gorgeous garment is made up of little stitches. It is the careful exactness of each stroke and each stitch that is essential to the perfection of the beautiful picture and the grand garment. So to put the best of ourselves into the small ways

and words of every day is the necessary and only way to bring out the perfection of our whole lives. It is good to feel keenly the dignity and importance of each word and deed, because each contributes to the perfection of the grand whole, of the working out of the ideal we are striving for. It is good for us all to feel it in the smallest trifles of every day. It is particularly good for young people to feel it. What you do to-day, the way you do it, the motive with which you do it, are of immense consequence to you. They involve the meaning of your whole life. If you were blocking out a statue you could not afford to break off one bit of marble the wrong way, or even break it off haphazard, without some sense of what you were doing. You would not sew your new gown together at random or without a careful study of the proper joining of its parts, to produce a desired effect. So you cannot afford to consider what you do or say to-day as 'a trifle' or as 'no difference,' because it will make a difference in the whole.

"It all makes a difference. It is the

SPEAKING HIS FIRST "PIECE"

words and deeds of to-day that are making or marring the great result you are expected to produce by and by. You cannot afford to throw away the smallest chance to make that result perfect. The sooner you realize that everything makes a difference, the better for that result."

"Then it is best, first, to see that the meaning, the sentiment, is what it should be," mused Mollie,—"even in little things."

"Yes, dear child. It is this sentiment of love and faith, of helpfulness and consideration, which makes the grandeur and beauty and the meaning of all life. You will find many people to laugh at it. But it is a sure sign of a shallow and vulgar mind to laugh and sneer at the sentiment of life. Vulgar and shallow minds are common, and are given to a cheap and common wit, and this wit is easily caught up and imitated by young people who have not yet found out how easy such smartness is. It is very easy to laugh at love and faith, at helpfulness to others, at friendship, and at the gentle courtesies of life. It is very easy to make merry over the loving confidence of little children

in their elders, and to sneer at their ignorance.

"Such smartness is cheap. Such vulgarizing of the sentiment of life is its lowest form.

"See that the underlying meaning of your life, its aim, its motives, are pure and noble, and your life will be a noble and a good one, in the matters of every day, as well as in its greatest events."

Other People's Affairs.

MOLLIE came into my room, one morning, with a long story about somebody's troubles with a dressmaker.

All I said, was:

"Don't waste yourself so in other people's affairs, my dear."

"Oh, I suppose this is a lecture about gossiping."

She came and threw herself upon the rug beside me. There was a little frown between Mollie's eyebrows, and her eyes said plainly: "I am tired of being lectured about gossiping."

I patted Mollie's hand. "Well?"

"I don't talk about other people more than other people talk about me, or more than other people talk about other people. And then people like to hear things. They are always glad to hear anything you have to tell. And it isn't always ill-natured talk either."

Mollie laughed and half pouted as she uttered her protest.

"Perhaps I can tell you something new about it, Mollie."

"Oh, no, you can't." Mollie exclaimed. "I know all about it. It's vulgar to gossip. It's unkind. It makes mischief. 'Idle, careless words'—that's what people always say,—'idle, careless words may do much harm the speaker never intended.'"

"In spite of all you know, I can tell you something new, Mollie."

"Oh, no, you can't," repeated Mollie. "I've heard it all, many a time. Perhaps you will say that I might be better employed in conversing on some intellectual subject. But I am not intellectual," decidedly, "I'm interested in clothes. Would you rather I'd talk about clothes than about people?"

"Yes, I might. Clothes are not an elevating topic of conversation, but many of the objections to talking about people do not apply to clothes."

"Perhaps you think I should talk about the weather," she persisted.

"Why, no. I did not mean to tell you

what you should talk about. This is not an essay 'on becoming a conversationalist.' Nor do I mean to tell you all you shouldn't talk about. There might be other subjects as objectionable as other people's affairs. I only wanted to give you an additional reason—additional to all you have stated, why you should not talk about other people's affairs."

"Well?" Mollie turned two inquiring brown eyes toward me.

"I think it may be new to you, dear. Perhaps at first you will not understand it. You will consider it is a strange reason. It is because your own affairs should occupy you so completely that only when other people's affairs actually intrude upon you, should you take an active interest in them. That sounds selfish, does it? It is different from anything you have ever heard before, is it not?"

"Yes." Doubtfully.

"You see, Mollie, the explanation is this. People—you and I, and every other person, I mean—do not make as much, or get as much, out of their lives as they might do if

they put more energy and thought and sympathy into them. And very often it is because they have wasted those qualities on other people's affairs first. Their sympathies and energies are expended all over and around others' affairs until they have none left with which to cultivate their own."

Mollie looked thoughtful. A questioning look crept into her eyes.

"When you exhaust yourself so in others' affairs, you lower the dignity of your own life, and make it of small importance. Now, your life was given you to make the most you could of it, and unless you do that first, you cannot rightly sympathize with other people. You cannot even properly understand other folks' business, or circumstances, unless you first intelligently understand and learn to manage your own."

"But I haven't got much to manage."

"You would find you had plenty to manage if you devoted more attention to what you have, my dear girl. You see, Mollie, you must get acquainted with yourself first. That takes some time, and some attention. While you are doing it, you are

apt to lose interest in the small affairs of other people, who are presumably attending to these affairs themselves."

"I don't believe it is easy to get acquainted with one's self."

"I do not believe it is easy, either, I know it is very hard. But I know, too, it has got to be done, before we are good for anything. To make a harmonious, useful life, we must find the centre of it, first. When we have once found that centre, we can understand and learn to govern ourselves, and our own affairs. And it is only after we have done that, that we can understand and sympathize with other people."

"But that might take us so long that we wouldn't have any time left," remarked Mollie, quizzically.

"We learn that, after all, everybody has pretty much the same affairs to settle as everybody else. What is good for us is good for every other human being. We understand that as no one can comprehend our secret motives, so we cannot possibly comprehend those of other people. Although we may always help them heartily

and lovingly, yet we dare not judge them, or even talk lightly about their affairs, when we know how complicated is the plainest human life.

"So, my dear, get acquainted with yourself, and find your own centre, first. Do not be discouraged if it takes long and is a difficult task. Find it, and let other people's affairs wait on the result of your search."

On Giving Advice.

IT is doubtful whether girls are very fond of listening to advice from older people. That is, general advice about manners or conduct. Some very good girls may be fond of it, or may say that they are—which is by no means the same thing. Yet the majority of healthy girls certainly dislike preaching, and prefer to get their knowledge of life from experience and from making mistakes. And this is, after all, the best way, and the way we were all intended to learn. It is expensive, but thorough.

When it comes to giving advice to other people or to expressing an opinion about the behavior of one or another friend, I do not think girls are backward. "I should think Grace would do so and so." "I don't see why Laura can't do that other thing." They say this without hesitation. Yet sometimes the most opinionated and decided girl may be in a state of doubt about the be-

comingness of a gown or about a point of etiquette, and be willing to hear what Grace or Laura thinks on the subject.

"Of course I ask advice sometimes," said Mollie, to whom I put the question, "and sometimes other girls ask me."

"And you tell them what you really think, do you?"

"Oh, yes!" answered Mollie, after deliberation. "But no one likes you to tell her that a gown is unbecoming, even if it really is."

"My dear, of course not. The gown is bought and made. And the girl only asks if it *is* becoming, because she is afraid it isn't. She wants to be assured that it is."

"And then about other things," pursued Mollie, "girls don't often take one's advice. They make up their minds what to do themselves."

"Of course. As I said before, that's what their minds are given them for: To think with; to decide with; to make mistakes, and thereby to learn. Did you ever think what a privilege it is to make mistakes, Mollie?"

"No, I didn't. Why, I think it is dreadful to make mistakes. You lose your time and your patience, and sometimes you don't have a chance to do things over again."

"Still, you are apt to remember next time when you have suffered by a mistake. That is the lesson of mistakes. A very wise man said once that he had made plenty of mistakes in his life, but he never made the same mistake twice."

"Yes, I read that somewhere."

"It's by failures and new beginnings that we grow strong. If a girl was so feeble-minded that she did each time whatever anyone suggested, her mind would soon become weakened and useless. The mind grows and develops by the decisions we make, and by various mistakes and turnings we at last discover what the right way is. And by and by, through repeated failures, we find the truth. And that is the grand aim of all living.

"There is one advantage in asking advice which a girl does not think of. It is an advantage, even if she does not intend to take the advice. Do you know what I mean?"

"No. What is it?"

"It is that she may get the light of another mind on the matter. For instance, you say to your friend: 'The circumstances are so and so, and I think so and so about it. What do you think?' And your friend says: 'Don't you see, that if the circumstances are so and so, that such a thing must be so?' And as she says it, a new idea dawns upon your mind, and you exclaim: 'Why, yes; I never thought of that before.'"

"I never thought of that before, either," says Mollie, thoughtfully.

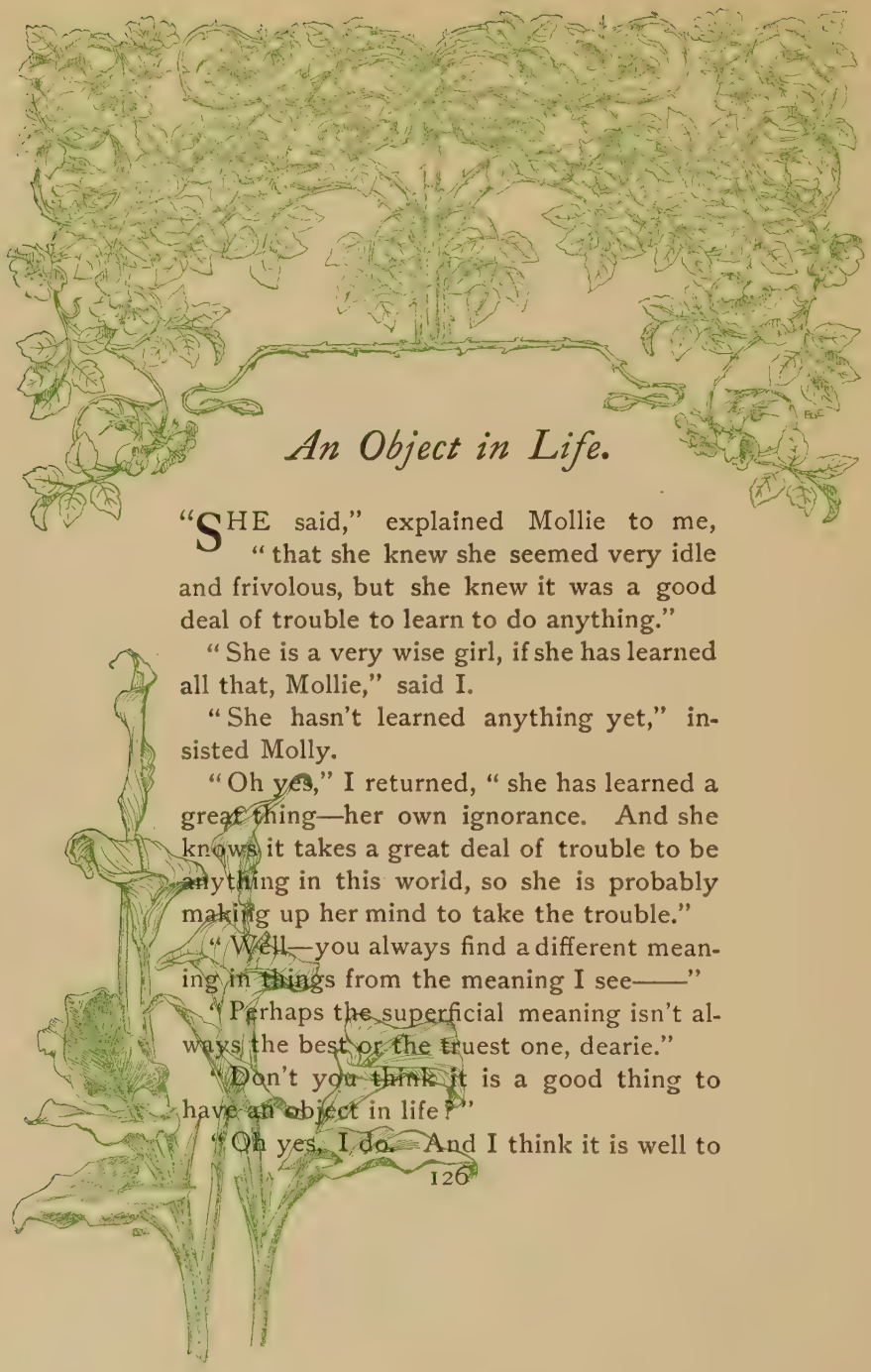
"Perhaps not. But you see the advantage, don't you? In thinking over the matter you have got a new idea to take into account, and this idea may make a great difference in your decision. We each look at things from a slightly different point of view. So the advantage of asking advice is not that you must take it, but that you may see the matter from some other point of view. In that way you get what is called 'a broader mental view,' and you are that much better able to decide for yourself.

On Giving Advice.

"And now you can see one benefit of asking an older person rather than a younger about any question upon which your mind is unsettled. The older has had more time to get various points of view upon a great many subjects, and she may suggest ideas which might be good to consider in making your own decision."

"Yes, I see. That is so."

"The best help anyone can give another, is to show that other the different points of view—the different sides of the question. 'Think of this, and this, and then decide for yourself.' Prove all things, and then hold fast to the thing you find good."



An Object in Life.

"SHE said," explained Mollie to me, "that she knew she seemed very idle and frivolous, but she knew it was a good deal of trouble to learn to do anything."

"She is a very wise girl, if she has learned all that, Mollie," said I.

"She hasn't learned anything yet," insisted Molly.

"Oh yes," I returned, "she has learned a great thing—her own ignorance. And she knows it takes a great deal of trouble to be anything in this world, so she is probably making up her mind to take the trouble."

"Well—you always find a different meaning in things from the meaning I see——"

"Perhaps the superficial meaning isn't always the best or the truest one, dearie."

"Don't you think it is a good thing to have an object in life?"

"Oh yes, I do. And I think it is well to

learn in the beginning that every good thing costs something, not excepting an 'object in life.'"

"You mean that any business or profession is a trouble to learn?"

"I mean that every attainment costs sacrifice and work. It would not be worth anything if it was easy to get. I heard of a girl not long ago whose imagination became fired with the accounts she heard of women earning good incomes for themselves.

"'Miss So-and-so does such a thing; and Miss What's-her-name—why, I heard the other day that she was really not doing much at all, but she made lots of money.'

"She thought over these facts, and at length decided that she, too, would have an object in life.

"'It is ridiculous for a girl of my abilities to sit about and help a little with the sewing or the housework. I suppose I could do more than I do, and give mother more leisure, but that wouldn't be any special object in life, of course. I think I would prefer an object in life.'

"So having decided, she announced her decision.

"'I am tired of going about and enjoying myself, or attending to trifling things about the house,' she said. 'I think I would like to learn some one thing thoroughly, and perfect myself in it. Something to teach, or something to work at. That would be an object in life, and I think I would like that.'

"So she selected the profession she thought would suit her and make a good object in life, and her obedient mother set out to fulfil her daughter's wish. She went about and interrogated friends and acquaintances; she collected information, and plenty of circulars; and she brought home all she did not forget or lose by the way.

"The judicial daughter assorted and pondered over and commented on the results.

"'It would take a long time to study this branch at A's school! Two years!'

"'Two years is not long. You are young enough to study two years longer.'

"'Oh, two years is a terribly long time!'

"'You have been idle for two years.'

"'Oh, yes, but I have been enjoying myself. Now I want to do something.'

"'How would you like to go to B's school? The course is shorter.'

"'Yes, but it's so far to go.'

"'You can ride all the way.'

"'Oh, of course! But I would have to get up so early. It always gives me a headache to get up so early.'

"'Mr. B said there were pupils in his school who came a much greater distance. One walks a mile to the railway station every morning.'

"'Oh, I never could stand that! It tires me to death to do a morning's shopping!'

"'Suppose you try Mr. C's school. That is somewhat nearer.'

"'Yes, but you have to study three hours a day at home. Fancy that! Dear me!'

"'But you get through the course a little sooner at A's.'

"'Yes, I suppose so. Though it would be terribly hard work. I never thought it would be such hard grinding as this.'

"Then she reflected awhile.

"'Well?'

"'Well, I think I will try A's school awhile and see how I like it.'

"So she tried A's school for a few months, and found she did not like it at all, and as it would take two years to complete the study, there was no use going any longer. Then she rested herself awhile. Then she tried B's school, but after getting up early a few times, and then going late a few times, she concluded that it wouldn't suit. Then she rested again. Then she tried C's school and D's school, and various other schools, and she looked in various other directions and about various other branches of study in which larger incomes could be made.

"But, strange to say, everything she tried had some drawback to its desirability. At length her mother inquired mildly:

"'Did you really expect to learn a profession without any exertion whatever, my dear?"

"'Well—er—not exactly,' she answered. 'But I didn't think it was so difficult to go to work!'

"And the only speech her mother permitted herself was:

"'Then you *have* learned something—that it costs to learn to go to work!'

"There are several morals to this true tale, but the only one I shall mention is, that every good thing, from a new gown to knowledge, has to be paid for.

"But the girl who wanted an object in life, is still looking for one that will not cost her anything."

Mollie laughed. Then she pondered. Then she said:

"Yes, it is a trouble to learn to do anything."

"Yes, but the learner has this advantage, that the strength of mind necessary to learn to overcome the obstacles, is a learning in itself."

"We kill two birds with one stone, eh?" laughing.

"Something like that, for the development of your own character is by no means the least of your own attainments."

Broken Resolutions.

THE beginning of the New Year is the time for making good resolutions. Many a girl begins her New Year by buying a pretty little diary and setting down a series of excellent resolves to be kept all through the year to come.

It is a good plan to determine to be orderly, to be economical, to keep one's temper, to be generous, and to be thoughtful. The exertion of the determination has a good effect upon the mind. The keeping of the resolve may last only a short time, but the small impetus toward the right in making the resolution, and each feeble striving to live up to it, helps us upward. We grow always, either upward or downward. And every tendency, however small, toward the upward direction is an aid in keeping us from the slough of despond into which we surely fall the moment we cease the struggle.

Broken Resolutions.

But many of us who began the New Year with brave resolutions have broken them before this and are looking somewhat despairingly at the pieces.

It might be that the resolutions were too difficult to live up to all at once, and we are disheartened because we have not already quite reached the standard toward which we set ourselves to work.

Let us be reasonable. No one can turn suddenly from a sinner into a saint. The saintship is many leagues off and is attained after a long period of time. It is the end of our journey, and is not to be reached at a bound.

So, if we have made only a very little progress, and are disposed to be discouraged at its small size, let us be comforted. All saints began the same way: with small steps and feeble, and, no doubt, with many a lying down in the dust to cry. "It is too difficult! I am too weak!"

It is very easy to give up the fight. It is fatally easy to give up struggling to do the right thing when the failures are so many and the successes are so few and so trifling.

But again, looking at our broken resolutions, perhaps we are conscious that we never tried to keep them at all; that we broke them before we tried to use them.

Here it is our cowardice as well as our weakness of which we are ashamed, and we feel keenly the mortification of the broken promise. That is bad, yet not utterly hopeless.

It may be the trouble is this. It takes some time, in our spiritual life, to learn just how to treat ourselves and what are the best conditions for our growth. Like any other new life, for a while our work is simply experiment, and it is natural that some of the experiments will fail; that is common sense and my philosophy teaches me that of all life the spiritual life is most in need of common sense in its treatment.

Now, there are some natures for whose best spiritual growth it is wisest not to make cast-iron resolves, or absolute promises, to do exactly thus and so. It is best for them simply to strive toward a right attainment, without making, even to themselves, any specific engagement against fail-

ure. That is, I believe that while promises and resolutions are helpful to some people, they are actually hurtful to others.

There are many reasons for this, reasons which it would take too long to discuss here. One reason will be sufficient. It is, because, in case of failure, to its natural discouragement is added the disgrace of having broken one's word. And this, to a sensitive nature, forms a combination almost deadening.

So, to such I would say, do not wait for the arrival of some grand occasion, perhaps next year, or the beginning of some new circumstances, or your next birthday, in order to make fresh resolutions or to bind yourself with a new vow.

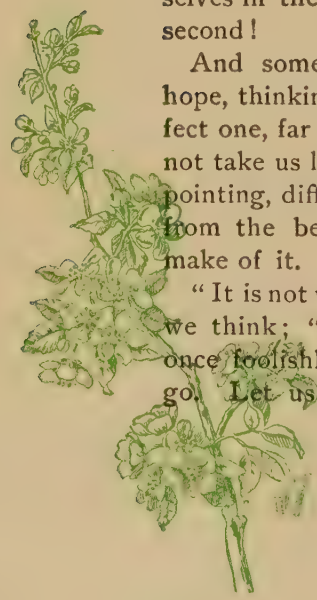
Begin with the broken pieces of the old resolve and start exactly from the miserable position in which you are standing to contemplate them. Simply say to yourself: "I will try again!" Then try, with an uncomfortable feeling of humbleness, perhaps, but with an earnest wish to retrieve yourself once more.

Now, it is a strange truth, that it is ex-

actly in these unpleasantly low positions where slight efforts "tell," and you will be amazed to see what a change will take place. You find yourself immediately in a different atmosphere and with renewed hope in your heart.

To those who have experienced it, the spiritual reward of such an effort is wonderful.

Indeed, I think that the little meek struggle we make to get ahead while in the valley of humiliation generally has such a telling effect that our next difficulty is to keep ourselves in the valley long enough to make a second!



And sometimes we start out in eager hope, thinking we can make our life a perfect one, far better than another's. It does not take us long to discover that it is disappointing, difficult, complicated, different far from the beautiful life we were going to make of it.

"It is not worth working at it any longer," we think; "it never can be now what we once foolishly thought to make it. Let it go. Let us do the pleasant thing—let us

take what comfort we can, and let to-morrow take care of itself."

Yes, that is what gets to be the easy thing. We never can come up to our mark, so what is the use of aiming at all? We cannot get a glorious victory; what is the use of fighting? What reward is to be found in never getting ahead, but just "holding on?"

Do you not know that the highest courage is that of the soldier who marches steadily on, knowing that the end is defeat? He knows the risks, he comprehends the dangers, he feels sure that death is ahead, yet it is his duty to fight, whatever the end may be. That is a nobler heroism than the flushed excitement of the man who pushes forward to victory.

Do you say life, daily life, is only ordinary, generally commonplace, frequently dreary, often sorrowful? Yes, that is so. Do you say, after all, it is not a fine thing, not a lofty thing, as in moments of excitement you sometimes fondly imagined it was going to be? That is so, too.

The task of to-day is not a grand one,

perhaps; it is to make the best of whatever the day brings. The burden of it may be dull and stupid, sharp and hard. Whatever it is, it is there for you to meet and to make its complications work together, according to the utmost of your power, toward good. And to do exactly this each day, leaving the next day—nay, the next hour—to come or not as it will, is the wisest and noblest resolution which the new year can inspire you to make.

Christmas Presents.

"STILL making Christmas presents?" I asked Mollie, when I came in from my walk, and found her sewing.

"Why, yes," said Mollie, jumping up to help me off with my coat. "It's only two weeks to Christmas, now."

"Well, Mollie, I won't ask you what you think of Christmas presents, for if you told me your ideas I might be more confused than I am now. And that would be a pity."

"Now, what's the matter?" asked Mollie, laughing at my energy.

"I made three visits, my dear, while I was out. After I had chatted awhile to the mother, in the first house I visited, I asked the daughter: 'How many Christmas presents are you going to make, May?'

"Not one!' promptly answered the pretty maid, who sat idly drumming her fingers on the window-pane.

"'And why not, May? Your friends all remember you. Every Christmas you show me hosts of pretty things that come to you from far and near. Don't you owe something to those who think about you so kindly?'

"'Well, I'll tell you why,' she said, with a sudden burst of confidence. 'For years and years' (she is sixteen!) 'I have worked hard for months before Christmas to make Christmas presents for everybody whom I thought by any possibility would make Christmas presents to me. I spent all the money I could rake and scrape in fancy-work materials—never had a cent for myself—wore old gloves and shabby shoes for weeks just to make ridiculous things for a lot of people I didn't care about. Now, I've just argued the matter out, and I believe I've been a fool, and this year I'm not going to make a thing for anybody—not one. I've been drawing long breaths and enjoying them ever since. I think I'm very sensible. I wish I'd thought of it before!'

"'Then you don't care to make anyone at all richer by even one present?'

"'Well, of course—I do *love* a few people. But my real friends are mostly sensible people who understand the situation and look at the matter in the same light as I do!'

"I found her cool common sense a little staggering. And I thought if everyone was of May's opinion there would be no Christmas presents at all! But, of course, that had nothing to do with her side of the matter."

Mollie listened with an amused smile.

"And who came next?" she inquired.

"Next I stopped in to see Martha Hooper about my new waist. She is a gentle, fragile looking girl. She makes her living as a dressmaker, when she is able to sit up all day to sew.

"I confess I looked curiously at her when I asked:

"'What is your opinion about Christmas presents?'

"'I make Christmas presents from one year's end to another,' she said, laughing and coloring a little. Then gravely—'I'll show you my stock.' So she brought out box after box, each holding some pretty and

dainty trifles. To enumerate the articles she had made in silks, satins, and velvets, and of all imaginable styles of fancy stitches, would be to call over the articles everyone knows and which are seen in such profusion at the holiday season. Mouchoir and photograph cases, bags, tidies, and pincushions galore!

"'When *do* you get time to do so much, my dear?'

"'Well, people are so very good to me always at Christmas, you know, and I like to give each one something—it isn't much. But I have the scraps of velvet and ribbon often from my work, and there are so many times I have to lie down and not do regular sewing, but I *can* do these little things. So I keep making them up all through the year. It's the only way I ever could make Christmas presents, you know—and it's very little, after all. I think I get more pleasure out of it than anyone does.'

"And if you had seen all the pretty things that girl had made, just out of gratitude, and while she was lying on her back, and in pain!

"I stopped next to see Miss Austen. She is teaching school this winter, you know. And in the course of our talk about numerous matters, I asked her the same question: 'What is your opinion of Christmas presents?' I had become quite interested in the subject, by that time.

"'Well, I make a regular business of Christmas presents. I find it's much the best way?' she replied, briskly. 'I put aside as much money as I find I can afford, and portion it out, so much to this one, so much to that. I'm always particularly careful not to show any favor, giving more to one than another, because I think more of one than another. Such partiality is always a mistake. Certain people have more claim on you than others; those are the ones the most money should be spent on. Then I buy with the amount of money whatever is appropriate and useful for each one. I never *make* things. It really costs as much in the end and is far less satisfactory.'

"'You are a very sensible girl indeed, my dear,' I responded fervently.

"And indeed, joking aside, she did say

some sensible things. But the three opinions have upset my mind so on the subject that I am unable to advise what *is* the best way, Christmas presents or none—there is so much to be said on both sides!"

And then Mollie and I both laughed. It really is a complicated subject, you know!

Consideration.

"DO you think it is a good plan to be considerate and polite just to make one's self liked?" asked Mollie, thoughtfully.

"Consideration for other people is a great charm in a girl, Mollie. It certainly does make her attractive. Why should you think it is not well to practise it?"

"It is only because of the reasons. It seems weak and false, somehow, to pay a great deal of attention to people you do not really care for, just to make other people think you are a very polite girl or have such fine manners."

"Manners that are put on are better than none at all. But who do you know that is only polite in order to be attractive?"

"Well, I do know—well, somebody, who I think pays a great deal of attention to older people just to hear herself called 'attractive' or 'well-bred.' I don't believe

she really likes to pay little attentions to people. It is only to hear herself praised," Mollie finished, firmly.

"Still, I think it is better to be considerate from such a motive than not to be considerate at all. I, too, have met very charming people in society who were very attentive and courteous to everyone. I did not think that they did it out of unselfishness; but I do not think their trained politeness injured their morals. A constant and ever-ready consideration for other people is a grace in a young person. It can be taught, as a manner, to a young child, and it certainly is a very charming accomplishment. It is pleasant if it proceeds from no higher motive than the wish to be attractive, if it has no better beginning than the intent to assume the habits of a well-bred woman. The desire to make those around her feel at ease, should become to such a woman a second nature, which has crystallized into the swift seeing of how the desire may be accomplished.

"To assist with a wrap, to yield place without apparent effort; to show the most

comfortable chair; to push the light nearer the other side of the table; to move a stool, or other obstacle from the pathway of a newcomer—these are but trifles. To do them costs little or nothing of self-sacrifice, yet the habit of doing them quickly and easily, of being ever on the watch to do something for somebody, is a habit well worth careful study and practice to the girl who would make herself an attractive woman."

"But I thought you considered the motive with which we do anything the most important part of it?"

"It is certainly the most important part of an action, but it is not all of it. I think I said that. Still, as you say, it is an outward manner, a manner which may be cultivated by any young woman who is inwardly very selfish and ill-natured, and who cultivates it solely for the purpose of making herself liked because she possesses it. But one may have the inward grace as well as the outward sign, and if one really wishes to cultivate this virtue one may as well have the best there is, and that is something better than the perfect manners of a well-bred

woman—I mean the consideration which springs from a real thoughtfulness for the feelings of other people."

"I think that is what I mean," hesitated Mollie.

"Yes, a real mental thoughtfulness—and remember that it can be cultivated, too, as well as the outward manner, Mollie—is better than the manner only, yet always includes that too.

"This is the kind which restrains the witty or cutting speech—easy as it is to speak it, hard as it is to keep it back—because the speech might wound a friend. This is the consideration which resists the temptation to tell the funny or clever story—delightful as it is to have a funny story to tell, disagreeable as it is to hold one's tongue when it is so easy to set some other person's opinion aside—because telling the story might show a friend's character in a false or an unpleasing light.

"This is the consideration which quietly foregoes a temporary pleasure or a little ambition—charming as it would be to take the pleasure, innocent as the little ambition

might seem—because taking the gratification might stand in the light of another's happiness.

"This is the best consideration, this is the inward grace, of which the polite manner is the outward sign, and such consideration as this does not remain a hidden grace. It shines out in the face as well as in the manner. It makes the plainest girl attractive, and gives an additional charm to the most beautiful."

Originality.

"DON'T you think Louise is graceful? Everything she does seems pretty, somehow. Her clothes, even, have an air, and everyone admires her, whether she stands, or walks, or sits down."

Dorothy, who stood near Mollie, replied:

"I like Kate's style better. She is so independent, and straightforward. She says just what she thinks, and never seems afraid of anyone's opinion. When I open my mouth I always feel as if everyone was looking at me."

"You'd never think they were sisters, they look so unlike."

"No, never. And one is dark, and the other fair."

"Yes, and Louise is not affected, either. Not a bit."

"No, I think each one acts just as she feels. Kate is independent, because she

feels that way, and Louise is graceful, just because she can't help it."

"Well, I do think Louise is awfully graceful, and I mean to try to walk and behave like she does. Everyone admires her. I am practising walking like Louise, and I stood before a mirror for half an hour, the other day, trying to sit down and get up from a chair, like she does. I can't seem to do it the same way."

"Well," confessed Dorothy, with a shamefaced little laugh, "I am just as bad. I have been trying hard, lately, to act and speak like Kate. It isn't so easy as I thought. If I act independently, people call me obstinate, and when I speak out plainly, I am rude. But I do think Kate is fine. I'm going to keep on trying to be like her."

So, in the ignorance of their blessed little hearts, these two girls each begin to copy her chosen model of good manners. The one girl practises attitudes of languid grace, and the other decision of word and action: Mollie keeps up her before-the-mirror lessons, she makes her gown in the style of

Louise, and arranges her hair in the way so becoming to Louise. Dorothy moves about with a long stride, in a way which she thinks exactly reproduces Kate's manner of walking. She says just what she thinks, and, particularly when she says something unpleasant, she imagines that she has reproduced the independent manner of Kate. Each girl, in short, tries to copy the style which suits some other girl.

For a little while, each thinks she has succeeded, and fondly supposes that people consider her as graceful as Louise, or as independent as Kate. But by and by, each dimly sees something is wrong and each begins to perceive the fact that no imitation can be equal to an original. There is always something missing that the imitator may vaguely feel, but can never supply.

In this case, it is the real nature of the girl, expressed in her manner. And the copy imitates only the superficial manner, but never gives the reality beneath.

Perhaps it is through much mortification, heartburning, and trouble, that each at last discerns that to have graceful manners, she

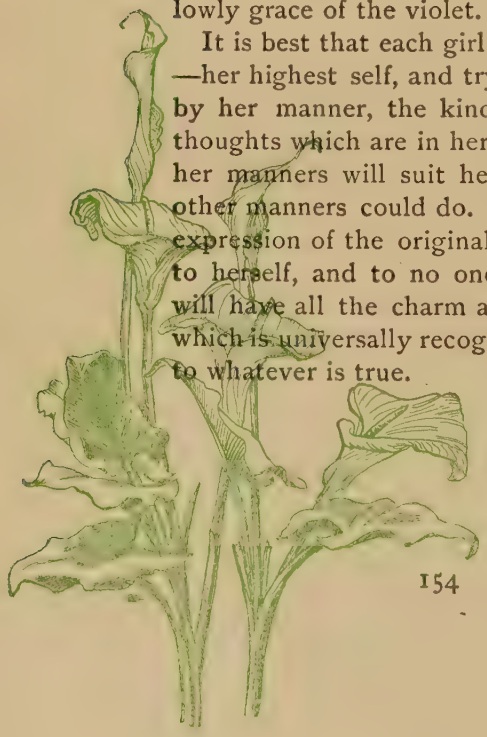
must be the graceful girl, first, and the manners come of themselves. That to have independence of speech and deed, she must be the independent girl first, and then the manners grow, just because she speaks out of what is in her. The grand truth is that manners which are worth anything have got to come from the inside, and are paltry as well as false when they are only worn outside for people to look at.

And it may be the day comes when each girl finds this truth. It is better to take the little bit of something original which lies at the bottom of every human heart, and make that just as perfect as she can. And then while she helps it to grow, as it surely will grow, she will speak and act out of the originality which is in her, and which makes her different from everybody else in the world.

For each girl in the world has her own special quality, the gift which individualizes her, and which, developed in the best way, will make her just as charming as the girl she tries vainly and foolishly to copy. Louise may be graceful, and Mollie may be

cordial and sincere, and refreshing as a summer breeze. Kate may be independent and Dorothy may be gracious and considerate. It is well we are not all alike. It is the difference which makes the charm. And it is just as foolish for any girl to imitate another's special attraction as it would be for the rose to try to copy the lily's whiteness, or the honeysuckle the lowly grace of the violet.

It is best that each girl should be herself —her highest self, and try only to express, by her manner, the kind, right and noble thoughts which are in her heart. And then her manners will suit her better than any other manners could do. They will be the expression of the originality which belongs to herself, and to no one else. And they will have all the charm and all the beauty which is universally recognized as belonging to whatever is true.



On Helping Other People.

ONE day, Mollie strayed in with the look in her brown eyes that said she had some thought she wanted to talk over.

"Well?" I said.

"Oh, well," said Mollie. "Well," with a little laugh, "how do you know?"

"Perhaps it's your eyes," retorted I, "or perhaps it's my lame knee, that makes me know."

"Did you ever think," abruptly, "that it seemed a hard fate to spend all your life making mistakes, and paying for them?"

"When I was a girl——"

"Now, were you ever a girl?" mischievously.

"Didn't you think so?"

"It seems," following out her notion, "as if the people who could always tell you exactly the proper thing, and how to do it, had always done the proper things themselves. They could never have done wrong,

if they knew so well the right thing to do. And, if they never did the wrong things, they could never have been young, for when we are young, we are always making mistakes and having to change our opinions."

"And how do you think I ever found things out, except by experience? How does anyone learn to help or advise another, except by going through experiences, and making mistakes, as you call them, under the same circumstances."

"That is what seems so hard, to spend all your life making mistakes, and gaining experience."

"What is life? Experience, Mollie."

"I suppose so. But if we spend all our lives that way, what time have we got left to help other people? We can't help them until we know how, we can't know how, until we learn. We can't learn until we have had experience, and you say that takes our lives."

"That is what life is for. It sometimes seems as if that was all it was for, Mollie."

"Then how can we—oh, I have often

thought of that—how can we ever help anyone else? Where is the time left to help anyone else?"

"There is not much, indeed, dear, if you look at it that way."

"And what other way is there," she exclaimed, "of looking at it? We go on and on, and make mistakes, and never know the right way from the wrong, until the chance to take the right way has gone—If we are only to find out what sin is, by sinning, and what will give us pain, by suffering, how is one to ever get ahead? Why, it is like a man travelling, who has to cut out a path for himself, and the next man, instead of using the path already cut, makes a fresh one. It takes all his time to do that, and by and by it is night. Why can't we know things? Why must we learn them so hard?"

"That, dear, neither I nor anyone living can tell you."

"And sometimes," went on Mollie, "I have thought this—perhaps you will think it a wicked thing to think, but I have thought it many a time. It all seems so

selfish—every bit of it—so horribly selfish. We are all the time working out our own problems. As the Bible puts it, we are continually working out our own salvation."

"It looks as if that was what we were put here for, Mollie."

"Yes, and that is what I think is so contemptibly selfish!" said Mollie, vehemently. "Why should we be forever working out our own salvation? Why should we be always worrying about saving our own souls? Why, I think it is the most beastly kind of selfishness, this forever thinking about our own souls, and our own minds, and our own bodies. What else is it but selfishness, through and through? Why don't we try to make other people's souls, and other's minds, and other's bodies clean, and not think about our own, but just trust for them? It seems to me," went on this foolish Mollie, "that that is the only unselfish way: to leave our own, and never think about saving our souls or working out our own salvation at all, but work and help and save other people's, and let our own go."

"You think that?"

"Yes, I do!" defiantly, from Mollie. "I have thought that a thousand times! I believe I am doing all the preaching to-day and perhaps, as I said, you think it a wicked kind of preaching, but it is the truth, and I can't see any other!"

"But, Mollie, if you will allow me—when I was a girl, that is exactly what I always thought myself!"

"You did?"

"Oh, yes! I always thought that. And just because you think it, I believe you are beginning the right way to help other people. And that is what you wish?"

"Yes, that is what I wish to do."

"Exactly! And it is a right desire, and therefore you will do it. But you have got to know how, haven't you? How are you going to point out the right way until you find out what it is? Can you hold up another by your strength, if you are not strong enough to stand up alone yourself?"

"No," admitted Mollie, with an air of not wishing to concede too much, "but——"

"Yes, I know! You are going to say, 'Suppose it takes all your life to gain strength to learn how?' Now, I believe this: if you begin by having in your heart strongly this ardent, keen desire which some hearts hold of 'helping other people,' you will discover that it will not take all your life to 'learn how!' You will 'learn how' sooner than other people, perhaps through fiercer, harder experiences; perhaps through some strange, undreamed-of way of learning and being taught. You must save your own soul before you can help to save others. You must clean your own mind, purify your own heart, cultivate your own body before you can tell, advise, or help others to do the like. And if I believe this, it is because I have learned it. But I agree with you this far, Mollie: the contemptible selfishness is to be satisfied with working out our own salvation.

"Working out our own salvation is not an end, but a means. The end is the salvation of the whole race—nothing less than that. And if we find that we must learn the lessons ourselves first, that we must do

these things for our own souls, minds, and bodies first, before we can do them for others, we may transform the task, redeem it from selfishness—glorify it, in a word—by regarding it as our probation, our teaching for our real work, which is to come when we have learned how!"

The Moody Girl.

"CHARLOTTE was in one of her moods this morning," said Mollie, sighing in sympathy with the moody Charlotte. "I felt sorry for her."

"What was the matter with her?" I asked. "She was very lively and happy, the other day, when I saw her."

"That's just it," exclaimed Mollie. "You never can tell whether Charlotte will be in a good mood, or a bad one. You never know what is the matter with her. She don't appear to know, herself, what is the matter. When I ask her, she looks forlorn, and says: 'Never mind, I can't help having the blues, sometimes.'"

"I'm sorry someone does not give her a few common-sense ideas about the matter. Charlotte is a bright, intelligent girl. She stands well in school, doesn't she?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mollie. "She will

graduate this year, sure, though every little while she acts as if she were afraid she wouldn't."

"And she is happy at home?"

"Oh, yes. The family are all very proud of her. She is very pretty, too."

"Then what sorrows has she got?"

"That's just it!" exclaimed Mollie, again. "No one can tell what is the matter with Charlotte. But sometimes she acts as if she hadn't a friend in the world, and as if every one was down on her. When we girls see that, we just let her alone. She says she can't help these 'fits of the blues,' as she calls them. Perhaps she can't, but I'm glad I don't feel that way."

"Do you think she enjoys being miserable, Mollie?"

"I used to think she did," said Mollie, seriously. "But lately I heard her say, twice, that she wished she didn't feel so. Charlotte is very lively when she is in good spirits, livelier than any girl I know. But deliver me from her when she has a fit of the blues!"

'Poor girl. Moody girls are much to be

pitied. They are uncomfortable to live with, but they are the worst sufferers from their unfortunate dispositions. And the more they suffer, the worse the occasion grows. They must learn to live above their moods, or at least manage to live through them with philosophy."

"I should think they would try to help it, if it makes them feel bad," said common-sense Mollie. "Do you think it can be cured?"

"Certainly. But it is hard to live above one's moods, or learn to control them, particularly if they have been encouraged. The first step toward a cure, is to know that one needs it. I think the worst trouble comes in when a girl imagines there is something superior in being unhappy and capricious. This is a very unfortunate and foolish mistake. Unfortunate, for it makes her encourage her gloomy fits, and foolish, for it shows her ignorance. Real superiority of mind is shown in the girl who uses her will power to control her moods, who keeps herself serene, in spite of misfortunes, or inward disheartening sugges tions.

Moody people listen to, instead of refusing to be controlled by these mental suggestions."

"What do you mean by mental suggestions?"

"Suppose you have an examination to take, and the discouraging thought comes to you again and again: 'I know I shall fail.'"

"Perhaps you do know it." Mollie said, solemnly.

"No, you do not, Mollie. That is the moment to exert your will power. Answer the thought, quickly, as if it were an outside person speaking to you. Say: 'I can succeed, and I will.' Such an attitude of mind keeps you serene, helps you to study, helps you, in a word, to success.

"Or, you are promised a pleasure, and the thought keeps coming: 'Something will happen to prevent it,' or, you have a friend, and the thought persistently presents itself: 'Perhaps she does not really care for me as much as she does for someone else.' Every one of these miserable suggestions can be driven out of your mind if you take

the trouble to do it. And they can be kept away by a persistent use of your will.

"But the moody girl allows herself to be the prey of these discouraging thoughts. And the more they are encouraged, or even not resisted, the more surely they will torment her,—thoughts of her possible non-success, of her friend's disloyalty, and of her own bad luck. These gloomy thoughts keep coming to harass and oppress her, until the poor girl cannot see one ray of light. When they first came, one vigorous resolve would have been enough to scatter them. And persistent resistance would have kept them away.

> 'One steady intent to scorn them,
> Doth scorn them, and slay them, too.' "

"Well, we've all told Charlotte she was silly, but it didn't do any good," Mollie said, despairingly.

"How is this for a practical suggestion," and I opened a book, and read:

"Yesterday, while your feet touched the ground, your head reached the clouds. Yesterday the air was a delight to breathe,

and the earth teemed with wonders. Was it not so?"

"Ah, yes! But that mood passed, how quickly! To-day, all is misery! Alas, alas!"

"True! Then let that teach you one small fact. One mood is as transient as the other. To-morrow your joy will come again. Yesterday, you refused to see, off on the horizon, the little cloud as large as a man's hand. To-day, while you sit in darkness, remember, and draw comfort from the thought, that the sun will surely shine again, to-morrow."

"I'll read her that," said Mollie, "next time."

Motives.

"DO you believe that anyone could do wrong from a right motive?"

Mollie spoke slowly—hesitatingly. She had evidently been considering the question.

"I certainly do, Mollie. Lots of people do it. I don't know that the number of people who do wrong from right motives is any greater than the number who do right from wrong motives. Yet we must conclude that the first lot is a little nearer the right way, since the motive is what should be most considered."

"How could the deed be wrong, then, if the motive was right?" Mollie looked puzzled. Well she might. These things have puzzled wiser heads than Mollie's.

Yet, thinking this, I considered also:

"Somebody must teach girls such truths, since very young girls may also make mistakes out of their very youth and foolishness, and, from little acts to great ones, do wrong from the purest and most unselfish of motives. Girls are specially liable to make this

mistake, and those of the finest character do it oftenest. Self-sacrifice and unselfishness are pounded into them from their childhood up, until they really believe that they may commit any sin under heaven so long as they do it from unselfishness and a self-sacrificing spirit."

"Do you think a man might commit murder from a right motive?" asked puzzled Mollie again, getting still more confused.

"He might commit a murder to save his own life. He might steal to keep his children from starvation. But though such motives extenuate crime, they do not make murder and theft commendable. Do they, Mollie?"

"No, of course not."

"No. And the man must suffer the outward penalty for his crime. He may not become a worse man inwardly if he did it from a good motive, but outwardly he suffers because he did it.

"Now sometimes very young girls, particularly those who are thoughtful and conscientious, often make the same mistake in their own lives. They decide upon some

action. They do it unselfishly. And they think that because of that they shall escape the penalty of foolishness. Now you can by no means escape the consequences of what you do. Although your heart is pure in intention, if the act is wrong it is bound to bring its punishment.

"If you jumped into the sea not knowing how to swim, you might be drowned, although you did it to save a human life. If an ignorant little child puts its hand in the fire, its hand is burned, just as the hand of the older person who knows the consequence of the action. That is because 'Nature punishes ignorant sinning as well as wilful sinning.' She only says 'You should have known!'"

"That seems unjust," comments Mollie.

"It is hard, Mollie. But since it is true, the wiser way is for girls to come out of their ignorance and learn a little of Nature's laws, enough to protect themselves from the consequences of headlong and foolish actions from right motives."

"Oh, yes. One might intend to do right, and yet do some very foolish or stupid thing.

And everyone would laugh, when it was just because a girl didn't know."

"Exactly, dearie. And that is why I say it is better to know, and if you are in doubt, talk the matter over with some wise friend, or at least think it over a bit in your own mind.

"But if you have made some little mistake, or done some foolish action out of a right intention, always remember, for your own comfort, that the laughter cannot really hurt you, if you meant to do right.

"It's this way. The motive and action have both to be considered. The motive is the most important to your inward life and to your conscience. But if the action was unwise, it might have far-reaching consequences which you could not escape. And you will find that the principle is the same, in a small action, as well as in a great one. There is always some motive, or moving power in what we do. Even if it is only to take a walk, or buy a gown."

"It seems silly to talk about 'motives for trifles like that," remarks Mollie.

"Yet, if you think a little, you will see

that there always is some motive for each thing we do, either a good or a bad one. You decide to buy a new gown. You buy it because you need one, or because you can afford it, and it is pleasant to have it. On the other hand, you may buy it because you wish to outshine some other girl, and make her envious. If you do that, do you think the purchase will bring as much good into your life as if it were made with a better intention?"

"I can see what you mean," slowly from Mollie. "But it would be a great deal of thought and trouble to find the hidden reason for every little thing we did."

"You do not need to analyze your mind so keenly, dear. There is an easier way. See that you keep it from malice and uncharitableness. Then you need not fear wrong motives. Motives are subtile and illusive things, but they hold a wonderful power, a power we do not understand, and which no man can measure. But the law which governs them is so great and so far-reaching, that we cannot escape its government, although we may apply the law to only so small a thing as a gown."

A Girl's Self-Respect.

"I DON'T think it was a very nice thing for them to do," said Mollie, flushing a little, when she told me about it.

Mollie often tells me of the things that happen among other girls, knowing I find them texts for my little sermons.

"So these girls, Nell and Lil, went out with this young man whose character they despised, accepted bon-bons and cream, and were discussing the coming question of theatre tickets. And you think this strange, Mollie? Perhaps you call it wrong. And why, my dear?"

Mollie looked astonished.

Evidently she thought a preacher should keep up her reputation. She floundered about for an answer.

"I know plenty of girls, and other people, too, do take presents and benefits from persons they don't like. But, somehow, I never could. I don't exactly know why," considered Mollie.

"Perhaps I can help you to find out why. These girls you speak of have had presents or small pleasures offered to them by people of whom they did not approve, and afterward laughed at, and they have accepted these things. You, you say, have refused the same things from such people. Now, did these girls, in accepting these trifles, have to pay anything for them, or would you have had to give anything for them if you had taken them?"

"Why, no; of course not. They were given—as presents, of course. If a young man gives a girl flowers or candy, perhaps it is because she has been his partner in a tennis game, or he passes an evening at her house, or walks or rides with her. If it is older people who give you presents, perhaps they want you to do little things for them; or you have done the things, and they feel as if they wanted to give you something for it."

"Then, according to your own account, my dear, the flowers and candy are paid for. Not in money, but in something else."

"Why"—Mollie thought about it a min-

ute—"yes, I suppose that is so. But I never thought of it as payment, because it isn't the same kind of things which one has to give back."

"No. You are given outside things—material things. You give back immaterial things, Mollie."

"Yes. And you always feel as if you ought to give something back, even if you don't do it."

"Certainly. And you always do give something back, whether you want to or not. You can't take anything, Mollie, without giving something back. You can't help yourself. There is no use trying."

"You have a feeling of obligation, I know," nodded Mollie, "and of course it isn't pleasant to be under an obligation to a person you don't like or respect. But some girls don't seem to mind that much. They think if they don't have to give anything but a little talk, or a little of their company, it doesn't matter much. They don't care."

"Exactly. They lose some self-respect in the matter. That's what these girls whom you were telling me about give. They

have to pay something for theatre tickets or candies. They give their company and conversation to whoever gives them these things. And when they take them from some one they do not respect or approve of, they give, besides, their self-respect. They must hold themselves lightly, or they would not sell their self-respect so cheaply."

"But they don't really lose anything," laughed Mollie.

"Ah, they do, Mollie! They can't get out of it, dear! They give their best things, their highest things, the things a woman ought to prize most, her immaterial things—for material good. Mollie, if you were a little older, I would tell you that that was *the woman's sin*, and that the woman of to-day has got to learn to be too grand a woman to sin that way any longer."

Mollie looked alarmed. "It isn't really a sin," she said.

"To lose what we were talking about is only a very little sin. I was speaking of the principle of it. And the principle is the same if you apply it to a serious sin or a venial one. These girls would better go

without candy or pleasure of that sort all their lives, than give ever so little of their precious selves for the sake of it. Girls should think more of themselves, they should hold themselves too high, to give ever so little of their personality for the sake of such trifles. Let them earn the money, if they haven't got it, to buy such things, rather than take them from anyone they do not know to be worthy of their company. You can understand this much, Mollie, that if such girls give a little of themselves now for such material good, they may, on the same principle, give themselves entirely away for the outside great good things of this world. Girls must think of these things. They are going to be women by and by. Think the principle out yourself, Mollie."

Girls do think further ahead than people give them credit for. Mollie did not speak for several minutes. Then she said:

"But we do give—and take—immaterial things sometimes."

"Yes, we give them, but they must be repaid in like, not in unlike things. Kindness for kindness, service for service, com-

pany and agreeable talk for the company and agreeable talk of others. But girls must be especially careful not to give men this much unless they find the person they give to worth honoring as well. If they do, they will inevitably lose a certain degree of self-respect. And girls must think this matter out and act accordingly, or they never can be the women we expect our girls to be in the future.

"There is one deeper depth to the question, and it is this: There is but one feeling in the world which can give all things, expecting nothing again. It is the broadest, unselfish love to all our fellow-creatures. Out of that we may give, give, give of ourselves, our lives, our possessions, and our store increases instead of diminishing. But this beautiful love is rare in daily life. And we must find it in ourselves first before we can find it in others. You cannot depend upon its presence in the passing stranger who offers you flowers or compliments. And therefore you must hold yourself above such petty temptations, lest the little loss of your 'girl's self-respect' develop into

the utter loss of your whole womanhood. My dear, will you think it out for yourself, and see what I mean?"

And Mollie promised me she would.

Courage.

"I HEARD someone say not long ago that a brave woman was unfeminine," said Mollie to me, with a little frown and a little pout.

Mollie, be it understood, is a courageous girl, and has proved her courage, physical and mental, on many occasions. I suppose this shot was from some weaker enemy, and it stung a little when she brought the question to me.

"You see—I don't think so myself," pursued Mollie. "But perhaps that's because I'm naturally fearless. I think it's nice to be gentle sometimes, and fearless always, and that it's quite possible to be both."

"Bravo, Mollie! You are learning, my dear. That's just what the girls of to-day must learn to be—gentle sometimes, and fearless always, like the iron hand under the velvet glove, of the ancient proverb.

But it seems to be one of the problems you are studying out; so, if you please, we will discuss it—for the benefit of the other Mollies."

Mollie nodded.

"Yes, I'm tired of everlastingly reading in the papers of the girls who shriek at a mouse, or a beetle, or an ant. So I made up my mind not to do those things. But I see it is true that lots of girls are really afraid of little things. They get easily scared—lose their heads, and don't know what to do—at every trifle, and are always afraid of what people say about them. Do you think it is natural for women to be so? Seeing it so often, has made me ask myself that. Is it really unnatural for a woman to be fearless?"

"In a certain sense it is, Mollie, since courage is not one of the natural virtues of the woman, or rather it never has been, and many people have not yet got used to thinking a courageous woman as natural as a gentle one. But the new girls who are growing up to-day, Mollie, have many new virtues which their mothers did not possess;

and courage and strength, mental and physical, are a couple of them. You can see what I mean. The girls of to-day are having opportunities of developing their bodies by all sorts of physical exercise, and the result is growing apparent in the stronger, healthier, better set of young women who are growing up to-day. They are having enlarged opportunities for developing their minds; they are encouraged to all sorts of mental efforts. They have chances to become professional and business women, and openings to make their own living in a thousand ways which the timid, weak creature of our grandmothers' day never dreamed of. And this also is having its effect in turning out a new sort of young women—women of strength of mind, and moral courage enough to brave the opinion of the few fearful ones left who would like to see the woman of to-day tied up again in her old swaddling clothes, bound hand and foot, and chained to her old place."

Mollie listened, and her eyes showed assent to all I said.

"And, Mollie, it is still true that in

living this stronger, fuller life, the women of to-day must be strong enough to smile at the unjust and unkind criticisms which come often from just this class of people. It will take some little time yet for the world to get used to this new style of women and this new set of ideas. You new girls must expect and learn to ignore the stupid and weak taunts from just this set of people."

"That isn't always easy," sighed Mollie.

"No; but you have got to do it. And all girls, old and young, who are brought up in this new estate of liberty, must do the same.

"I can't show you my point easier than by telling you a little story, and I am sure that lots of girls all over the land will understand and appreciate its lesson.

"I have a small 'Mollie' of my own, Mollie—aged twelve—who is being brought up in all the liberty that I think all girls should have. She plays baseball, or tops, or kites, as fancy takes her; jumps fences or walks them (don't be horrified), and is growing strong and active under the treat-

ment. But once or twice lately she has come to me with the same frown and pout in her brown eyes that you showed me a few minutes ago.

"'The other girls call me a tomboy!' she said.

"'Well—what of it?' I replied, calmly.

"'Won't you make them stop?'

"'Oh, no! They can say so if they think it. You must learn not to notice such silly things!'

"She doesn't get any more satisfaction out of me than that.

"She came the other day again.

"'Well, now, one of the girls dared me to jump the "post" (a small hydrant near our house), and when I did it, then they all said I was a tomboy to do it!'

"'Why didn't you tell them that not one of the rest of them could do it as well as you could?'

"'Why, because, if I did, they would say they wouldn't be such tomboys as to do it!'

"'Now, my dear little girl,' I said, 'you can jump that post, and not one of the other

girls can do it! And you have got to be satisfied with your ability to jump it, and learn to laugh at the other girls who can't do it, but who call you a tomboy because you can! Go on jumping posts, and laugh at them! By and by they will be glad to have you teach them to jump too!'

"Now, Mollie, that's just the case with lots of you girls to-day. You are able to jump posts, mental as well as material ones; but you haven't yet got over the foolish feeling of fear of being laughed at because you are strong enough to jump them.

"Mollie, whatever you do, don't stop jumping the posts! Go on; and while you do it learn to laugh, as my Mollie shall, at the girls who don't know how and haven't courage to learn."

The Sensitive Girl.

OUR visitor walked out of the house with an "I am used to be crushed" air, and suspiciously tearful eyes.

"Your friend seems easily offended," I remarked, when Mollie sat down dejectedly beside me.

She sighed. "I ought to have remembered that Ethel is very sensitive."

"What was it you said to hurt her?"

"Oh, I didn't intend to say anything. I suppose it was some trifle."

"But Ethel knew you wouldn't for the world say anything to offend her, Mollie. I often think that much of this so-called sensitiveness is only another name for self-conceit. The sensitive girl is not satisfied unless she is injured about something."

"Well, Ethel generally is unhappy over something, but she often says it's because she is so sensitive."

"I don't mean to say that all sensitive

girls are only conceited, but I think that a sensitiveness easily grows into a self-conceit, when it is encouraged in the wrong direction."

"But I thought it showed a more delicate nature, if one was sensitive."

"Yes, a sensitive nature is one that feels more keenly than another, and is more easily touched by joy or sorrow. But it is only a morbid form of sensitiveness that prides itself on being unhappy over imagined slights. A sensitive nature may be a source of joy or misery, just as its possessor chooses. It all depends upon whether you govern it, or let it govern you."

"I didn't know you could help being sensitive."

"You can govern it, if you choose to take the trouble. I had a great deal to do with an over-sensitive girl once, and I made a little study of the class. Shall I tell you some of my conclusions?

"Sensitive girls may not be as numerous as the sands of the sea, but there are enough of them to form a very distinct and unhappy class. The sensitive girl is always unhappy.

Generally she knows she is sensitive because she is unhappy, and she comes to the conclusion that the sensitiveness is the cause of the unhappiness.

The sensitive girl feels hurt at every little thing done or said by relative or friend. It seems to her as if she were the target for everyone's remarks or doings, and as if all the world conspired to insult and outrage her sensitive nature. She sheds many tears, and goes through much real misery, and is open or reserved about the matter, according to whether she is encouraged or laughed at by her guardians or associates.

The sensitive girl generally feels rather proud of the delicate condition of her feelings. She holds herself a little above the stupid and phlegmatic people who feel little, or who manage to get along and be happy despite the rude, unsympathizing nature of their surroundings. Sensitive feelings, she is sure, betoken a refined, elevated, spiritual temperament.

And of course such a temperament as that is a degree above common natives, and therefore to be envied and cherished. So

she continues to hug her sensitive feelings, and her pride and unhappiness mutually encourage each other. Perhaps she would be rather loath to be told that a little common sense would help the matter amazingly, or that sensitive people have, above all others, need of the virtue of common-sense. Yet so it is.

"Common sense is an adorable quality: There is such a thing as spiritual common sense, and those who possess it can set their lives to any time and any tune.

"So to the girl who finds herself in possession of this inwardly sensitive nature which she is half-proud of, half-unhappy over, and which she does not yet comprehend, I would say: 'My dear, train yourself by the strictest rules of common sense, force your feelings to obey your reason and your judgment. If you do that, you can make your nature yield you joy and delight, for it is truly, if rightly managed, the finest nature in the world. If you do that, you can enjoy where now you suffer, and find pleasure where now you think there is only unpleasantness.'

"Men and women in this world have to learn how to manage and train themselves before they can begin to get any comfort or good out of life. We have to know our strong and weak points, and understand our capabilities and failings. We have to train ourselves as a man would train a pair of wild horses, to learn to use our capacity for good and evil as a workman would have to learn to use a set of tools before he begins to create the beautiful forms which show his lifework.

"Just so, the sensitive girl has to learn something about her temperament. It is her feelings that are at fault. She must bring them into subjection to her reason. She must refuse to be made miserable by any event, big or little, until she has argued the matter out in her mind, and discovered whether she has just cause for misery or not.

"You see, my dear, the beauty of this method is that, if you find out positively that you have real cause to be offended, there is plenty of time to be miserable afterward (there is always plenty of time to be

miserable); but if you find that, under the circumstances, such a proceeding would be a foolish waste of misery and time, why you have gained something, and you are stronger to meet the next occurrence.

"This girl must believe, in the second place, that there is no virtue in being unhappy. The virtue and strength is in making ourselves happy in spite of outside circumstances. We were meant to be happy, not miserable; and although it takes some determination and perseverance to claim our inheritance, it is well worth it when we get it. Don't forget that. The final beauty of the sensitive, spiritual nature is to be happy. And if we are going to get the most good out of this world and out of this temperament, we must make up our minds firmly that we have a right to be happy, and that only weak-minded people believe that it is a fine thing to be miserable.

"Now, these two rules will help a sensitive girl very much if she makes up her mind to try them. Sensitive people need special training, and special help from all the common sense they have."

Generosity.

"SHE is the most generous girl," cried Mollie, enthusiastically, "that I ever saw!"

"What did she do that made you think so?"

"It happened while we were out together. Myra had money with her to pay a bill at the milliner's. She met Mrs. Atkins, and Myra gave her all the money she had, for some poor woman she told us about!"

"But that was not generosity, Mollie. It was somewhat dishonest. She had no right to use the money to give away."

"Oh, that was all right. She was going to replace it when she got her next week's allowance. She meant to pay the bill herself."

"I have little belief in this semi-honest generosity, a generosity that is simply an easy throwing away of money. It is a giving that does small good to the recipient or

the giver. It often degenerates into giving money we do not really own, money we should use for another purpose. It costs us nothing. And to give that which costs us nothing is not the highest generosity.

"Again, true generosity must include how we give, as well as how much. Did you ever think that the way we gave made a difference in the gift itself?"

"You mean give cheerfully."

"And that means, dear, not only to give money, or clothes, or work. It means everything we give up as we go along in life. Some are taken away from us, but we should not give them up grudgingly, nor of necessity. Whatever is the thing we give, the rule of giving is the same. It is the heart and the love we put into it that counts more than the actual value of the thing itself."

"Like the widow's mite," suggested Mollie.

"I read a little story about giving, the other day, Mollie, which will show what I mean by the best giving. The woman who tells the story says: 'The hardest thing I ever gave up, girls, was just a few thoughts

that I was selfish enough to want to keep for myself.'

"'It was after my dear baby died, my only little one, and I thought over his sweet little short life, for I was much alone in those days, and brooded over my sorrow, until at last comforting thoughts of my baby's dear little ways and my tender association with him in those few months came to me. They comforted me so that I often sat for hours dreaming of him, until I thought I actually felt the touch of his little hands, and heard the sound of his little cooing voice.

"'And just at that time a neighbor of mine, a poor woman, but a loving, careful mother, lost her baby too, and, unwillingly enough, I know, I went to see her.

"'And the first thing she said to me, and it was so strange, I feel the mystery of it yet, was: "Ah! you have lost a baby as well as I. Tell me how you feel about yours." And, I felt as if I could not speak one word of my real thoughts; not one word to the poor soul!---I, to whom such comforting thoughts had come. I wanted

them—all for myself. I thought, they are about my baby, not about hers; they were given to me. Let her get her comfort for herself if she wants it! And, grudgingly, I began to say all the perfunctory things one says at such times. I spoke of the duty of resignation, and other duties of which one talks on such occasions, not believing—God help us—half we say, nor expecting those who hear us to believe, either!

"'And when I had finished, what the poor mother said was, "Yes, it may be all so; but now tell me what you really think about it."

"'And when she said it, I just had to give up! I broke down and cried, and told her of my baby, and of the loving, beautiful thoughts that had come to me about him. It was a terribly hard thing to do, for I had never spoken of the child all those months. I had only sat and thought about him. It was hard, but it grew easier, for after that I comforted many and many a mother-heart with the thoughts that had been sent to me. And, strangely enough, the more I gave of my thoughts, the more the sweet thoughts came—thoughts of the little children that

are so dear to Christ that He draws them closer to Him.

"'So now I know that when we are given more than is given to another, it is not for ourselves only we have it. It is that we may give to him who needeth! And this certainly means money or time or goods or work. And it means something else. It means thoughts or abilities or power to speak, or anything, high or low, which we may use in God's service. It is not for ourselves alone we have it, and we cannot refuse to give it. Only this one thing is in our power—our way of giving, cheerfully or grudgingly.'

"You see, Mollie, there is an easy giving, and a hard giving. And, strangely enough, it is the hard giving which is worth the most."

Self-Depreciation.

"SOMETIMES," exclaimed Mollie,—she often comes to me for comfort when she has a fit of the blues,—"Sometimes I think I never can be as pretty or as lively as Allison, and there's no use in trying to be attractive at all when she is present."

"Don't get the notion into your head that everyone is prettier than yourself, Mollie." I was nursing my usual patient, a lame knee, and somehow, that night, it made me feel cross.

"Auntie!" cried Mollie in astonishment.

"Yes, I mean it. It's better not to think of yourself in comparison with another person at all. Don't always be considering whether you are prettier or uglier, brighter or stupider, better dressed or not as well dressed, as someone else. You are not exactly like some other girl, but it is likely that you are quite as attractive, if you act

as if you were, and forget to think whether you are or not."

"But certainly it is not right to think too highly of one's self."

"Yes—and no. It is better not to think about yourself in a comparative way with others, if you can help it. Be yourself, but don't think about it. I think the worst rut a girl can get into is that of self-depreciation."

"But how can one help it?"

"Self-depreciation is usually based on a false estimate of one's appearance or manners, or an exaggerated self-consciousness of some trifling personal defect. Young people suffer much from this cause, because they have not yet become aware of those abilities or advantages they do possess. And they do not yet know that in each one of us some power or talent is latent which, properly developed, would make us a pleasure and profit to everyone. A hundred girls may be charming, each in her own way, and no two may be alike."

After reflection, Mollie said:

"I think it is a good plan to tell a girl

something about herself that is pretty, and then she is more likely to forget the things that are not."

"I think so too, my dear. Those having charge of a girl are much to blame when they constantly remind her of her defects, instead of showing her how to conceal or soften them, or—should that be impossible—teaching her to forget them. I think excessive self-depreciation tends to bring out faults rather than virtues. The immature mind is more apt to think angrily, than humbly, of it's inferiority to another."

Mollie nodded.

"Yes, I know what you mean. It seems as if it were hard to be slighted for what is not your fault. You would be pretty if you could."

"It tends to mortify and weaken a girl to always think meanly of herself. 'I am not so pretty, or so attractive as other girls, it is no use for me to try to be entertaining.'"

"Yes, and then you think it is no use trying to be anything."

"Such self-depreciation is worse than weakening. Such thoughts bring the very

misfortunes they dread. If a girl is forever afraid she is not pretty, her dread is written upon her face, and it keeps her ugly. If she is constantly worried lest she should not be entertaining or attractive, her distrust is quite enough to keep her unattractive, or to prevent her becoming entertaining."

"Then you think it is better to consider one's self entertaining, whether one is or not?"

"Yes, I think I do. Let the self-conscious girl take it for granted that she is entertaining, while she is talking to her partner on some subject of interest to him, and as she forgets herself in her talk, she will find, perhaps to her astonishment, that she has become the entertaining, person she has assumed herself to be."

"And what about being pretty?"

"So with beauty. The girl who is most admired is not always the girl of regular features, or perfect figure. And the girl who knows she is not a beauty may do much to gain prettiness, if she goes to work intelligently.

"She may not use rouge or pearl powder

to cover up her defects, but she does what she can to make her weak points good ones, and a great deal can be done if the matter is carefully studied. She can keep her complexion clear and her hair becomingly arranged. She can adapt her dress to her figure. She can always have her small belongings fresh and dainty, and her manner can be always quietly agreeable to every one. And a girl who tried to make herself all that I have described could never be ugly, though her hair was red or green, and her nose a snub or a Roman. She need never think of herself as ugly, for while she tries all legitimate means to make herself beautiful and agreeable, she actually is doing so, and she can be quite confident of the result.

"And another thing she can do. By regular exercise and out-of-door living, she can acquire a breezy, wholesome air, which is always attractive to those who value health, and the cheerful spirit which helps to create health, as well as ornaments it."

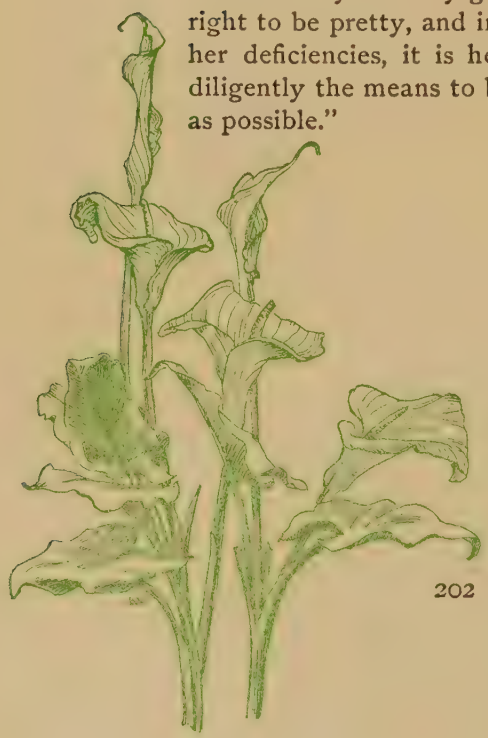
"You seem to think we can make ourselves beautiful at will," smiled Mollie.

"And so we can, my dear. And it is

one's duty to one's fellow creatures, to make an agreeable object of one's self, as far as possible. To make the most of one's good points, and to soften one's bad ones, is not only a privilege, but an obligation we too often neglect."

"Then you think it's one's duty to be good looking?"

"Certainly. Every girl has a duty and a right to be pretty, and instead of lamenting her deficiencies, it is her business to seek diligently the means to become as beautiful as possible."



Frankness.

"I WOULD like to know what you think of telling the truth," Mollie said,—"of girl friends telling just what they think of each other."

"I think frankness, like any other virtue under the sun, can be carried to excess. That is easily answered, my dear."

"I think friends ought always to tell each other exactly the truth. That is the fine thing about friendship," said Mollie, gravely and sententiously.

"Mollie, truth is a beautiful thing!"

"That is what you are always saying," Mollie retorted.

"And I don't intend to go back on my doctrine—not a whit. Truth is a precious commodity, my dear, and one must be very careful how one gives it, unsought, to people."

"Do you mean that it is better not to tell the truth to people unless they ask us to do it?"

"Something very like that. I think it is hard, sometimes, to conceal the truth, and to a nature that loves truth for its own sake, it is particularly hard. But there are occasions when concealment is better than much unnecessary truth."

"Now, suppose a girl asks you how her gown looks, or her hat, and you don't really think either of them is becoming, isn't it better to say so, than to praise the hat or the gown when you feel you are telling a lie?"

"What do you think yourself, Mollie? Suppose the gown or the hat was on your own person?"

"I think it would be better to have someone tell you it wasn't right, than to let you go on thinking it was, when people might be laughing at you behind your back," answered Mollie promptly. "I think a true friend would tell you so, if you asked her. I would tell another girl, I know."

"Let us examine that statement. Suppose you were on the point of starting for a party or to the play, and at the last minute some over-candid friend should tell you that your hat made you look like a fright, or

your gloves fitted badly. Do you think it would conduce to your pleasure at the festivity,—such unpleasant truths about your clothes?"

Mollie laughed.

"Well—perhaps—not exactly. It would certainly be a bad time to choose to tell it."

"But if you asked her to tell you what she thought?"

"She might soften her opinion a little bit, until I had a chance to alter the clothes which were unbecoming. She might wait until some other time."

"Just so. Then you see we cannot speak the exact truth without some consideration. We must choose the best time to tell it. We cannot speak it at all times."

"Yes, I see."

"Now it is also true, my dear, that it takes a very strong nature to bear to know all the truth about itself, and no undeveloped or immature nature can stand it, and the courage and common sense required to hear exactly our friend's opinion of us are not the qualities yet possessed by young folks."

"Why young more than old?"

"As we get older we learn to be more charitable, not to be so cruelly frank, and if people are over-frank with us, not to be too much hurt about it, or too angry with them."

"Then you think it cruel to say just what you think, even if you are sure it is the truth?"

"Yes—it surely is. It would be unnecessarily cruel, to say nothing of its impoliteness, to tell each girl you meet just what you think of her. And if your friend should insist that you tell her the truth about herself, the most gentle and careful consideration is not too much to bestow upon how much to say, when to say it, and how to say it."

Mollie's nod showed that she conceded that much.

"Again, some people seem to think that to be truthful means to tell disagreeable truths, and that to tell a friend a truth that is pleasant is flattery or servility. I knew a girl once who told her friend that she always wore her gloves too small a size.

Her hands always looked squeezed up in them. The mother of the girl who said it, was told of the speech, and she remarked, with a smile, that,—'Annie was always so truthful.'"

"It might have been true," commented Mollie, thoughtfully.

"Yes, it might have been true, but my point is that pleasant truths are just as true as unpleasant ones. It might have been just as true for that girl to tell her friend that her waist was becoming, or her hair done up in a pretty style. There seems no reason why the kind thing should not be said as well as the unkind one. If one must be suppressed, why not the speech calculated to make your friend unhappy? If one must be told, why not the agreeable one? For the most of us, consideration and a wise reserve is conducive to the most harmonious friendship."

My little girl, grown thoughtfully silent, looked out of the window, as I concluded:

"There are some natures—ardent—aspiring—that have a passion for the truth, and, desiring only to live open lives, and to tell

the truth about themselves, give others credit for the same feelings. But these natures are rare, and must follow their own rules, remembering that they must prove their conclusions before they can offer them to others, and that the law of love should finally govern all words and deeds."

Reticence.

SAID I to Mollie:

"Do you think it would be of any use to tell girls not to talk too much?"

Said Mollie to me:

"Perhaps! But it isn't only girls. Everybody talks too much."

"Mollie, you are getting profound! You will soon have to take the office of instructor yourself and proceed to teach me! Since when did you begin to suspect that people talked too much?"

"I have often thought so," replied Mollie. "Talking to anyone implies that you are friendly with them. So if you sit silent in company, you appear sullen or ill-tempered. You feel yourself obliged to talk, often when you have nothing to say, and would prefer to keep silent. You feel as if you were obliged to do it. Everyone feels the same way!"

"Isn't that going too far, Mollie? Every-

one doesn't feel the same way; since, if they did, they would sooner arrive at an agreement to keep silence. There must be people who talk from choice, and who prefer to talk—even if the talk is aimless and empty—to remaining quiet. What do you think?"

Profound reflection on Mollie's part.

"Yes—I see! It is so! But the talk of the people who prefer to keep on with aimless and empty conversation, rather than remain silent, is the worst kind of all!"

"That is perfectly true, Mollie! It is idiocy and malevolence combined, and there can be nothing worse than that. But let us go back to the beginning. It is of girls I was speaking. A girl of pure heart and innocent mind does not talk too much from an unkind desire to inflict her opinions on other people. Nor does she do it out of a malicious wish to betray her friends' secrets or her own, or to say spiteful things about other people. But there is no doubt that in talking too much she often does impose all these injuries on the world. She does it out of a spirit of thoughtlessness and lightness of heart. She dreads to appear serious,

so she treats nothing in life seriously. She hates solemnity, and wishes to have a good time and enjoy the game of life. So she makes a game of all life, and her efforts to avoid solemnity often end in the most solemn kind of a disaster, and instead of a good time she finds she has secured the very worst kind of a time, and her only recourse is to begin all over in the right way!"

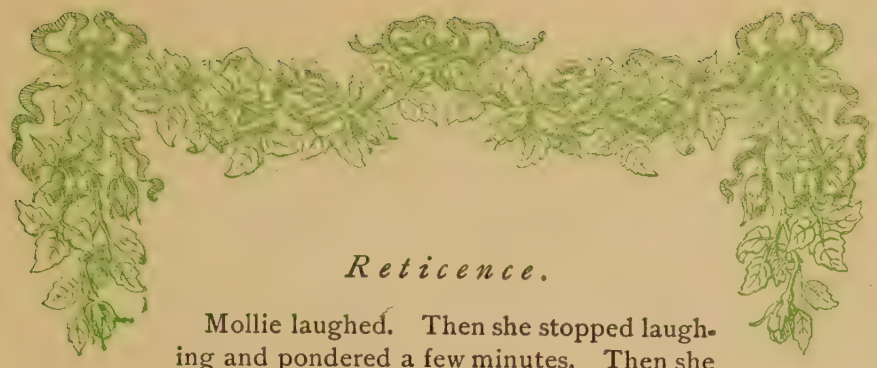
Mollie looked somewhat alarmed and bewildered. Seeing it, I smiled.

"It was I who let my subject run away with me that time, Mollie. Girls do all that who allow their ignorant views of life to influence their conduct too decidedly. But the girls who only talk too much, and do it out of thoughtlessness and high spirits, often make much mischief without meaning any harm. It is a wise reticence which they need to learn—a reticence which respects not only their friends' actions, opinions, and feelings, but their own; a reticence which does not express views upon subjects of which their knowledge is limited, and which does not judge people whose circumstances are beyond their own experience, or censure

deeds whose motives they cannot possibly comprehend. Girls must feel that they also owe it to their own dignity to reserve their opinions until they know more of the matter, and to do it habitually, and in the smallest details. The reason is that by to-morrow you may change your mind, because you will know more than you do to-day—that is, it is to be hoped you will!"

"But even if you do," laughed Mollie, "there is nothing disgraceful in changing your mind. If we were always consistent, and only believed what we always had believed, we would have to live in ruts, and never learn anything at all!"

"Certainly, my dear Mollie. But there is no special merit in advertising the progress of your knowledge to the world, is there? For instance, when you have mastered the rule of three, you don't rush out and proclaim that fact to the multitude, incidentally remarking that you have completed your mathematical education! Why don't you? Well, because, if you are not a fool, you know that there must be other rules to learn to-morrow."



Reticence.

Mollie laughed. Then she stopped laughing and pondered a few minutes. Then she looked up and smiled.

"Perhaps it would be better to tell girls not to talk at all!"

"Far be that from me, Mollie! I would as soon tell a brook not to babble, or a flower not to keep nodding in the breeze! But I would teach girls how to be silent gracefully before I taught them how to converse gracefully, although the process is usually reversed. And since it is always easier for girls, and all young people, to do things by rules, here is a fine rule for the girls who begin to see that it is a good plan to learn reticence, if they only knew how to set about it. The rule is this: Never tell the *whole* of the story you are telling, nor speak out your *entire* thought on any matter, and keep this rule religiously in mind, whether it is your own affairs you are speaking of or another person's.

"*Never tell everything; always hold something back.* Never tell all that you know. Does that sound trite, or even slangy, my dear? There is a whole world of meaning

in it, for you as well as for me, and for anybody who thinks at all. I know that reticence is one of the hardest things in the world to learn; but I know, too, that it is one of the things most worth learning, and no girl can afford to do without it. It is a power that, once gained, is mighty and can never be lost. And strange as it may seem, when you have once made that power yours, *you may talk as much as you please!*"

Loyalty.

I OFTEN go to Mollie for inspiration.

"Mollie," said I, the other day, "what do you think about girls being loyal to each other?"

"Some girls are loyal to their friends," replied Mollie, after a moment's pause.

"Yes?" tentatively.

"Of course all girls are not," went on Mollie, "but that's because they have not grown big enough to know how great a thing it is to have a friend."

"It set me thinking. It *is* a great thing to have a friend, a real friend, I mean. If one has not grown big enough to have a real friend, great enough to appreciate one, one does not deserve to have such a blessing, and, naturally, does not get it. For we each get things as fast as we deserve them, and can understand them. That is true. If you don't think you are receiving all you deserve to have, don't complain

about it, for that makes you less deserving. Set to work to make yourself more worthy, and better things will certainly come.

"But about friends. A friend is one you like and admire more than you do the majority of other people. Now there must be some quality in that friend which compels your liking. As you grow more intimate, you find other qualities which perhaps you do not love as much as those which first attracted you.

"Your friend is brave and sincere; frank and cordial; lively, and a pleasant companion. But perhaps she is sometimes impatient, irritable, quick-tempered, and says unkind things which she scarcely means and heartily repents.

"Well, did you expect to find her perfect? Are you perfect? If you are not changeable, perhaps you are stubborn; if you are not irritable, perhaps you are sullen; if you have to bear with your friend's imperfections you may be sure she has to bear with yours. As a friendship has to be between imperfect human beings it is imperfect in its nature. Those who find the best friend-

ship are surely those who try to make themselves worthy of it."

"I do think that," remarked Mollie, approvingly. "It is always the finest people who have the most friends."

"Then to have a number of friends is a sure sign that the person must be worth something."

"Why—yes!

"Then you see that the surest way to gain plenty of friends is to make yourself worthy of friends. Do that first, and the friends will come. You can't help gaining them after that."

"But, sometimes," Mollie commented, "when you know people well, they are not so nice as you thought."

"Perhaps, but then, as I said, no one is perfect. Don't expect it, and always remember that you may not be so nice yourself, when people know you well."

"You think I am nice," coaxingly.

"My dearie—I love you!"

"Ah yes," cried Mollie, "that is it! You love me and you are loyal, even if there are some little things you don't like."

"Perhaps there are big things I do like. If what you love is noble, honest, sincere, pure, you can forgive little things. And that is better than to love a lively manner or a handsome face, and find falsehood and foulness behind it."

"Oh yes!"

"And after you have once proved your friend good, never forget that one of the first essentials of a friend is loyalty. If your friend has qualities which make you love her and desire a continuance of her love, you are bound in honor to overlook the little things you disapprove, just as you expect her to overlook the objectionable things in you. A true 'friend' does not repeat, laugh at, or comment on the trifling faults or weaknesses of a 'friend.' She who does so proves herself unworthy of the friendship. Everything may be forgiven in a friend except *disloyalty.*

"What do you think about it, Mollie?"

"Just that," answered Mollie, firmly. "The girl who tells her friend's little secrets, who comments on her friend's little faults, who laughs at her friend's little defects, is

but a hypocrite in addition to being unworthy of the friendship she claims. To have anyone love us, when we know down in the depths of our hearts how little we deserve it, is a great thing. It is something to be glad of. As for the little things where our friend is not all we like her to be—well, we should balance them against the greater qualities, and if we find that she has more good than bad, *and loves us, too*, I think we ought to be content to let the lesser things go. We ought to conceal them from other people and shut our eyes to them so tight that by and by we don't see them at all.

"Why, there's the sun," continued Mollie, "even the sun has spots on it! The sun is the best friend we have; we could not live without him! I don't want to see the spots on the sun, and I won't look at them, even if the sun asks me to! I think it would be mean!

"And if my friend is good enough for me to admire her and want to keep her, and if she loves me and wants to keep me, I will try to be very charitable, not severe, about her little failings, and at least keep quiet

about them before other people. I think that's the least people who call themselves 'friends' can do. I know I expect my friend to do it for me!

"That's my idea about it!" concluded Mollie.

I believe it's my idea too.

Growing.

"I THINK I'm growing old," laughed Mollie.

"And why, most ancient of young women?"

"Oh, I'm outgrowing so many things."

"Such as what?" I asked.

"Why, there's fancy work, for one thing. I liked that pretty lace work, so much, last spring, and I don't care a thing about it now. It's just tiresome. Even that lovely Russian embroidery, I haven't done in the longest while."

"And anything else?"

"Why, I used to care for cake-making, and I tried all kinds of recipes, and now that I can make a very good cake, I just hate, on Saturday, to be called to make it."

"And do you not care for any occupation, to take the place of fancy-work and cooking?"

"Why," answered Mollie, thoughtfully,

"I think I like out-of-door amusements better than I used to do. A lot of us belong to a walking club, you know. And we take a long country tramp, once a week. I've got to like that, immensely."

"To be fonder of out-of-door life and exercise is 'growing-out,' in a splendid way, Mollie. I am glad to hear that. I hope that such a growing will get bigger and bigger, every year."

Mollie smiled.

"It is queer how one thing grows out of another, isn't it? We have been taking these walks for nearly three months, since early in the spring. And about three weeks ago, Alice Davidson proposed that we make a list of the flowers we found on each excursion. She is very fond of flowers, and she always comes home with quite a collection. And now we have the tramp, and the interest of the collection, too."

"And did you find many flowers?"

"Oh, yes," cried Mollie, growing enthusiastic. "I wouldn't have believed there were so many different kinds, even in a short walk, as we found last week! I never

noticed them, particularly, before. When we passed, I just saw that they were blue or yellow. But now, I like to see the different shades of blue, or the many kinds of wild flowers that are blue."

It was my turn to smile, now.

"You are growing finely, and fast, Mollie. We always grow, somehow, and our care should be that we grow in the right way. And your way seems to be development in just the right direction. The physical exercise leads to the mental exercise, just as it should. To study botany, or entomology, or any science, in the open air, while you are exercising your body, helps your mind to grow, too."

"We didn't think we were studying science. We just called it collecting wild flowers. And then, of course, we wanted to know their names."

"And how did you find that out?"

"Why, Alice Davidson's uncle has a great many books on flowers. That is how she grew to care so much for them herself. He taught her botany. So we hunted up our flowers in these books and found out what

they were, and what class they belonged to. and where they grew most."

"You were deluded into studying science without meaning to do it."

"Well, if that pleases you, I'll tell you about something else I am growing to like. I have been taking French lessons this winter, you know. Mother wanted me to do it, but I never cared for it until lately. One of the girls had a cousin who came from France. She had been at school there for three or four years. And Laura brought her cousin to the class to talk to us. The French sounded very funny at first. I couldn't understand a word of it. But now it's getting to be quite interesting to try to make out what she says. The verbs and the French grammar seem easier when one finds they are going to mean something, by and by."

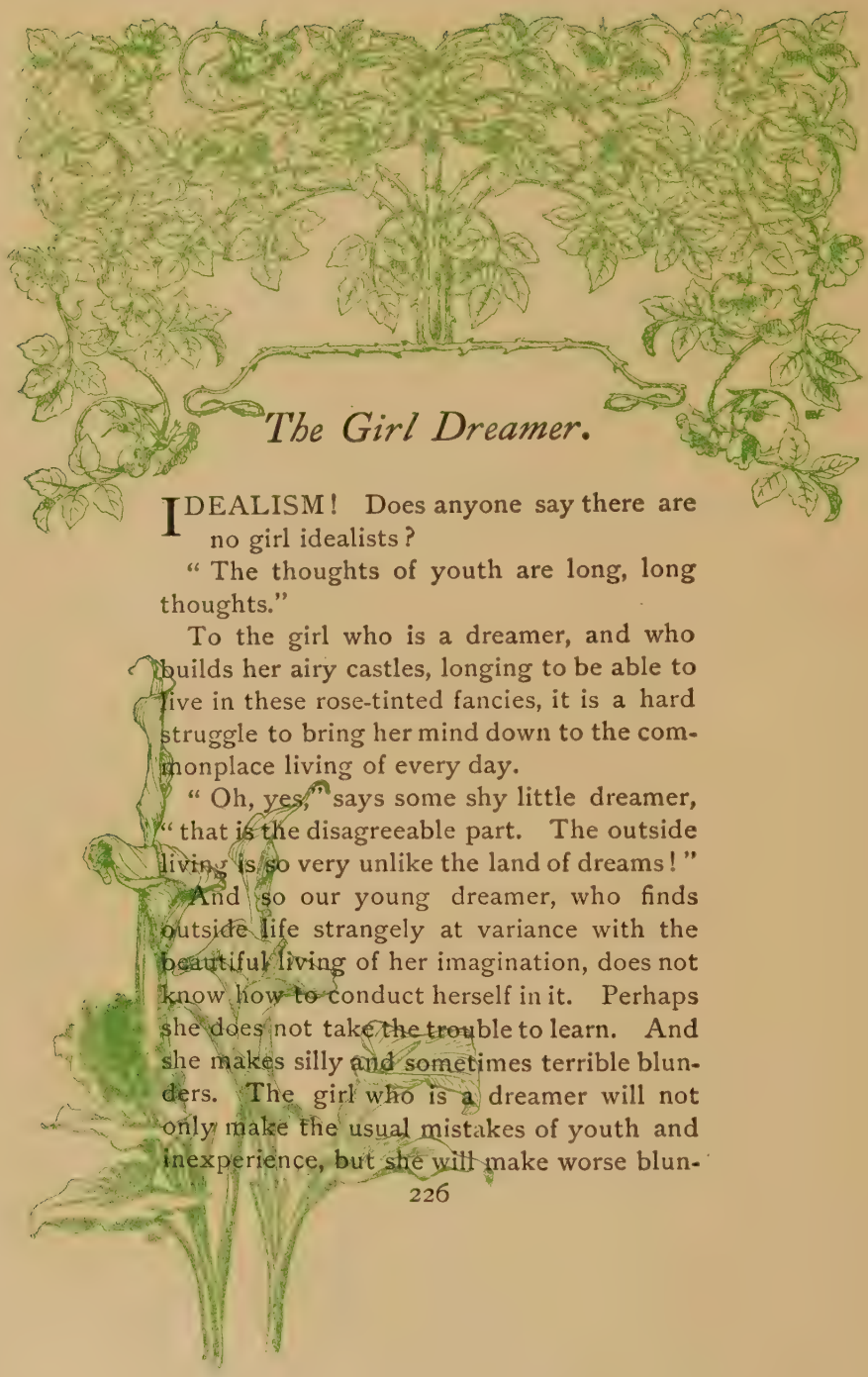
"Yes, that's true. When we find there's a meaning under our lessons, we learn so much faster, eh, Mollie?"

"Yes. I suppose to lose a taste for one thing, and get to like another,—that's growth."

"Certainly. Only one must be sure, each time, that it's a growth toward something better."

"There's one thing about the cooking, though. I think I ought to like that more, for it pleases mother when I make a particularly good cake or pudding. And I mean to try to like that better, just for her sake."

"My dear little Mollie! You are doing the very best kind of growing in the world!"



The Girl Dreamer.

IDEALISM! Does anyone say there are no girl idealists?

"The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

To the girl who is a dreamer, and who builds her airy castles, longing to be able to live in these rose-tinted fancies, it is a hard struggle to bring her mind down to the commonplace living of every day.

"Oh, yes," says some shy little dreamer, "that is the disagreeable part. The outside living is so very unlike the land of dreams!"

And so our young dreamer, who finds outside life strangely at variance with the beautiful living of her imagination, does not know how to conduct herself in it. Perhaps she does not take the trouble to learn. And she makes silly and sometimes terrible blunders. The girl who is a dreamer will not only make the usual mistakes of youth and inexperience, but she will make worse blun-

ders still, because she is confused at the difference between her dream life, and the life in which she has to act. And sometimes she finds out, through hard experiences, that the rules governing everyday living are not the same as the principles governing the ideal life she cherishes in her heart.

So this girl blunders. There are many like her, and I know her well. This girl idealist dreams lofty and noble dreams, and in her dreams she plans her life and decides what wonderful things she is going to do in the future for her own life and for humanity. She is going to help the weak and to oppose the tyrant. She is going to right the wrongs of the oppressed.

She may be a philanthropist, a writer, or an artist. She has not yet, perhaps, decided what particular line her talents may take. These details she has not begun to think out. But of one thing she is sure: the fame of her good deeds shall spread far and wide and her name shall go down to future generations.

She has heard that foolish people have made mistakes in their lives. That is only

because they were foolish. They did not look at life from a high standpoint, or they did not act from correct principles. Such people, of course, make mistakes. For herself, she has studied the matter deeply and understands it thoroughly. She proposes to act always from the highest and purest motives; consequently, she will have nothing to repent and nothing to regret. She will never commit any action of which she can be ashamed. She will never be obliged to exclaim: "Alas! I should have acted differently!"

Alas, poor idealist! Sometimes when I think of a girl of this stamp, when I read their dreams in their eyes, when I see by their blundering actions the high standard at which they are aiming, I sorrow for them, while I rejoice. For it is girls like this to whose womanhood great possibilities are given, and it is through the blood and tears of realism that their dreams are to be wrought into daily life, and their ideals transformed into living realities.

For our idealist goes stumbling on through the mist of her dreams, her eyes dazzled by

the glory of the light beyond. At last some rash step wakes her up to perceive that it is in everyday life that she has got to begin, not in the clouds, and that it behooves her to turn quickly and redeem the false step she has taken.

And it is just here that our dreamer reaches the turning point of her career. Has she got, or can she get, the strength of mind to redeem the step, and work out her mistake? It will take courage and patience, determination and persistence, and, above all, an abiding faith in her ideal, and a confidence in her ability to outlive the blunder.

Now she is like a dreamer waked up, whose illusions have been torn away, and who, at last, fully realizes that to materialize the beautiful dream she has dreamed, earnest and untiring effort are needed.

"Oh, 'tis easy to beget great deeds,
But 'tis the rearing of them,
The threading in cool blood each mean detail,
Through furze-break of half-pertinent circumstance,
There lies the self-denial."

Sorrowing over her lost dreams, she turns to her daily life and begins there. The work

is hard, the way rough and long. And though she may not know it, those very things should give her the most courage. The labor is hard, for a great thing is to be wrought out. The way is rough, for it is up-hill, and the road is not a beaten one; and it is long, because grand deeds take long in their accomplishment.

But one thing is sure. What? The end. One thing she never forgets. What? The dreams of what her life was to be, while she mourns over what it is. And so she shapes her life as best she can, not knowing—oh, the pity of it! oh, the gloriousness of it!—not knowing that she is shaping out the very dream her heart conceived long ago.

For this girl's ideals are her patterns, given to her—yes, by God Himself—to be copied and worked out in the years to come and by the circumstances of her life, which are the materials given her to use.

Ah! all dreams are possible to the dreamer who has faith and courage.

Standards.

"IT is a queer thing," said Mollie, meditatively, "that people's ideas of right and wrong are not alike."

"Explain yourself, Mollie," said I.

"Well, Florence thinks she ought to act in one way, and Dorothy thinks she ought to act in another—in the same circumstances, you know. And I think I should do something entirely different. Now which is right? Is there any exact standard of right, and how can we find it?"

"No, there does not seem to be any exact standard of right, in small cases, in ethical cases, as we say. That is, where small questions of conduct are involved. Our standards of right are usually made by our education. They are different in different countries, and at different periods of the world. Your guide is only your own knowledge of right and wrong, controlled by the great law of Love."

"Then Dorothy might be right, and I might be right, although we did entirely different things?"

"Oh, yes. You can see that by a very simple illustration. It might be right for one girl, who had plenty of money, to spend a hundred dollars on a gown. It might not be right for another to spend ten dollars for the same purpose."

"Oh, yes."

"Again, it might be right for one girl to leave home to earn her living, and very wrong for another to do the same thing."

"But the circumstances might be different," said Mollie.

"True, and the circumstances are always different, even when to an outside observer they are apparently the same. Suppose a girl longed to do teaching or missionary work. But she is an only child and her parents do not wish her to leave home. Ought she to go, or not? One girl answers, 'No,' another says, 'Yes.' Whatever she did, somebody would blame her. And I think it is the part of charity not to blame another too much, whatever she may do,

because it is impossible for an outsider to know all the secret forces that move another, or even to know all the small determining circumstances that influence one's decision."

"I think the girl should stay at home," said Mollie, emphatically.

"Exactly, because, in your case, you feel the demands of home life stronger than another girl might. But that is not the answer, Mollie."

"What is it, then?"

"The only important thing to that girl, is, that she should do what she is satisfied is the right thing to do. She may suffer if she does it, but that is what she should do, —the thing that she knows to be right."

"But it may not be right," persisted Mollie. "She may find out afterward, that it was wrong. Sometimes we are sure we did right and we find out we were wrong, all the time."

"Yes, that is because we have grown, and we have a broader mental view than before. Still, I repeat, if you think a thing is right, do it. We should get along much faster in life if we followed that simple rule, 'if you

think a thing is right, do it.' Don't hesitate, do it."

"Suppose there is some reason why you can't do it," hesitated Mollie.

"Certainly there may be, my dear. Often we are afraid to do what we know to be the right thing. Often we feel too weak, too unable to do it. Often we think we cannot get through with it. Often we let ourselves be persuaded to do the easy thing, instead of the right one. The greatest force that holds us back is fear, generally fear of the world's—that is, of the other people's, opinion. We always suffer if we deny our faith that way. We always know that we are not so great, not so noble, not so complete in character as we might have been if we had lived up to our own secret standard. Another punishment we may meet is, we may never have the same opportunity again. We have lowered our standard once, we are compelled to live on that lower plane ever after."

"Do you think we each have some standard of conduct, in our hearts?" asked Mollie, after a moment's silence.

Standards.

"Oh, yes, dear. Consciously or unconsciously, in our secret places we set up our ideals. These are our standards, which we begin to grow toward while we are yet unaware of the process. It is like the tiny seedling to which the child who plants it gives the support of a string, which leads it toward the pole it is not yet strong enough to twine about. And, generally unconsciously, as we grow we change these standards, supplanting them by better ones as we approach them nearly and find them inadequate to our needs. We must do this. Our little vine has grown. The string which was sufficient while it was weak is not enough for the sturdy vine. We must continue to do this, as we must give our little vine a taller and yet taller pole to climb upon, when we find it has arrived nearly at the top of the pole we set up last year. And as it is the straightness of the pole, its height, and its direction which determines the size, the shape, and the beauty of the vine, whose guide and helper and pattern it was, so it is the slow adaption of years of growth toward this ideal which we are

(blindly, it may be) trying to copy which creates the whole character, inevitably forming it good or bad, high or low, according to the character of the standards we have set up in our hearts. Therefore let us beware of the low standards, let us at least aim high. Aspiration toward the best is possible for us all. And the first rule for growth, is the rule I gave you a moment ago, when you think a thing is right, do it—every time, do it."

Happiness.

"THERE seems to be a great deal of unhappiness in this world, don't you think so?"

Mollie reached this conclusion after a prolonged brown study.

"There are a great many unhappy people in the world, dear child."

"But why should so many people be unhappy? I am sure everyone does not deserve it."

"You cannot always tell that. You do not know all the details of the lives of other people, what they have done, or what they have left undone. And again, many people who have, apparently, all the conditions of happiness, are constantly fretful and unhappy, while others, who have misfortunes enough to make them miserable, are serene and cheerful."

"Oh, yes, I have noticed that," assented Mollie, quickly. "There is Emily Ward, the lame girl, who sews for us sometimes. She is always cheerful, and never speaks of

being sick, or of being poor. But she has to work hard all the time, and it can't be very nice to be lame."

"Then, even in your short experience, you have met the people I described. And what about the other kind?"

"You mean the people who have everything to make them happy, but are always unhappy? Why, yes, Auntie! Why, yes, I do! There is Mrs. de Forest. She has a beautiful home, and two dear little girls. She has plenty of money to do with as she likes. But every time she comes here, she is in some trouble, generally with her cook, or her dressmaker. The last time it was a decorator, who had tinted her sewing-room the wrong color. She nearly cried that day. I asked mamma what she did it for, and she said; 'Poor woman, she has an unhappy disposition.'"

"Then you can see that happiness or unhappiness does not depend — certainly it does not *always* depend upon outward conditions. Wealth or poverty, health or sickness, trouble or freedom from anxiety, these different conditions do not decide the

happiness or unhappiness of the person concerned."

"Then what does make a difference?" Mollie asked, wonderingly.

"See if you can think it out for yourself."

"If it is not anything outward, it must be something inward," reasoned Mollie. "Is it disposition? Mamma said 'an unhappy disposition.'"

"That surely has much to do with it. Some people are happy with very little of comfort or hope, others are loved and admired, and have the most agreeable surroundings, yet they are miserable. You see I do not speak of money, or even health, now."

"Something inward," pursued Mollie. "Do you think we could be happier if we made up our minds to be happy?"

"Yes, I do. You have noticed that some people are unhappy over trifles. Do you not think they could refuse to let themselves be made miserable by little things?"

"Oh, yes, of course. Perhaps," said

Mollie, slowly, "it is a question of selfishness, or unselfishness. Perhaps if people were doing things for other people more, they would grow too grand to worry over the small things in their lives."

"That is one very good recipe for happiness. Another is this: 'Happiness arises from a serene consciousness of right thinking and right acting.' And here is another: 'The really happy person is the busy person, the one who is of the most use in the world. A pregnant motto is that of the far-famed 'Sunshine Society': 'Do something for somebody, quick!'"

Mollie thought it over, and then she said, slowly:

"'To be unselfish'—'to do right'—'to be useful'—'to do something for somebody'—Why, it all means one thing—to be good! To be good—to be all good, is the way. Wealth or poverty, health or sickness, ease or hard work—nothing makes any difference but that—to be good. That is the way to be happy."

"I think, Mollie, my dear, you have found the answer."

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